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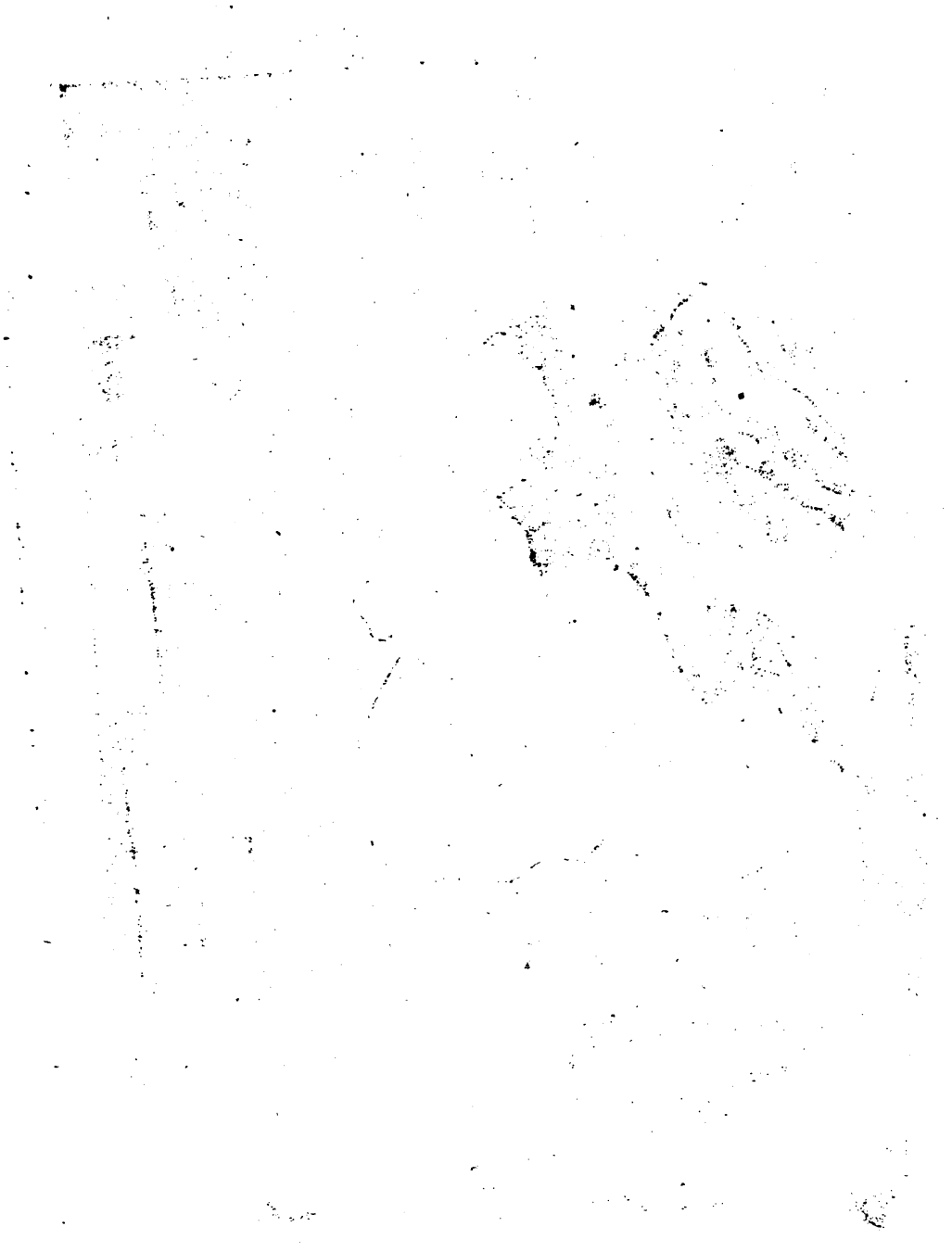
THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

Per. 2529 e. 64
1869



A PUZZLE FOR GRANNY.

THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. I.] JANUARY, 1869. [One Penny.

The Little Dove.

THE LITTLE DOVE.

CHAPTER I.

From the German of C. Schmidt.

MANY hundred years ago there lived in the old castle of Falkenburg a brave knight named Theobald, and his amiable wife Ottilia. The knight was as kind-hearted as he was brave, and was the defender of all that were oppressed, asking for no reward but the pleasure of doing good to his fellow-creatures. The Lady Ottilia, too, spent her time in works of kindness, visiting the sick in their cottages in the neighbouring valley, while the deserving poor found help and kindness at the castle.

The only child of these excellent people, a little girl of about eight years old, followed in the footsteps of her parents, and knew no greater pleasure than giving happiness to others. The whole family was everywhere loved and honoured, and the blessing of God seemed to rest upon them, prospering all their worldly concerns, for they belonged to one of the wealthiest noble families in the land.

One fine bright summer's day, Lady Ottilia and Agnes went, after dinner, into the garden, which was situated on the slope of the mountain; a little door in the wall of the castle court led to it by a flight of stone steps. They stood for a while beside a fountain in the middle of the garden, watching the water as it sparkled in the sun and fell in a thousand drops, reflecting all the colours of the rainbow. Then they sat down in a shady vine-arbour of trellis-work, and worked busily at a dress they were making for a poor orphan child. Everything was still and peaceful; the silence was only broken by the cheerful song of the linnet, and the pleasant splashing of the water.

Suddenly something white fluttered into the arbour pursued by a bird of prey, which hovered for an instant with outstretched wings over the entrance, but flew quickly away, scared by the sight of those within. Agnes was for a moment too frightened to look round; but her mother said, laughing, 'Do not be afraid; it is nothing but a little bird, which has taken refuge from a kite. See, it is a snow-white dove, and, in its fear, it has hidden itself behind you.' She took it up, looked at Agnes, and said, 'Shall we have it cooked in the evening?'

'Cooked!' cried Agnes, horrified, stretching out her hands for the dove, as if to save it from the threatened death: 'surely, dear mother, you are not in earnest! The poor bird has come here for safety, we must not kill it. Oh, see how pretty it is! it is as white as snow, and its little feet are red, like coral. See how its heart is beating. It looks, with its innocent eyes, as if it were begging us not to kill it. No, you dear little thing, nobody shall hurt you. You came here for safety, and you shall be taken care of.'

'You are right, my dear child,' said the mother, kindly. 'You have guessed my meaning; I only wished to try you. Take the bird to your room and feed it. We must never turn away the unfortunate who come to us for help; and even animals have a claim upon our kindness.'

The mother ordered a pretty cage, with a red roof and green lattice-work, to be made. Agnes placed it in a corner of her room, and the little bird soon became quite tame, and learned to eat out of her hand.

Early in the morning, while Agnes was still asleep, the little bird would fly upon her pillow, and give her no peace until she got up and fed it. Agnes complained to her mother, and said, 'I know what I will do to prevent the troublesome bird from disturbing me in my sleep. I will fasten the cage at night, so that he cannot get out in the morning.'

'No,' said her mother, 'you had better learn from the bird to get up earlier. Early rising is good both for the health and spirits; and should you not be ashamed of being more idle than a dove?' Thus Agnes became accustomed to early rising.

One day Agnes was sitting near the open window at needlework, while the dove was picking up some crumbs at her

feet. Suddenly it flew out of the window, and settled upon the nearest roof. Agnes uttered a loud cry; her mother came, and asked her what was the matter.

'Oh, my little dove!' said Agnes, in tears, pointing to the roof where the bird was sitting.

'Call it back,' said her mother.

Agnes did so, and immediately the dove flew down and settled upon her outstretched hand. Agnes was delighted at the bird's obedience, and her mother said, 'I hope you will always be as obedient to me as the dove is to you; it will give me even more pleasure than you have felt. Will you promise me this?' Agnes promised, and kept her word; and from that time it would have been difficult to find a more obedient child.

One day Agnes had been watering her flowers in the garden, and sat down by her mother on the green bank near the fountain. The dove, which was now so tame that Agnes let it fly about, came to the fountain to drink.

'Look, mother,' said Agnes, 'how cautiously it steps from one mossy stone to another, and how carefully it avoids the mud. How very clean it is; you never see the slightest speck upon its white feathers.'

'And how careless Agnes is!' said her mother, pointing to the child's white frock, which she had soiled in filling her water-can. Agnes coloured, and from that time no spot was ever seen to remain long on her white dress.

One day Agnes went a little journey with her mother, and when she returned home in the evening the little dove flew to meet her, and showed great pleasure at her return.

'It has fretted after you all day,' said the maid, 'and looked for you everywhere. It is quite wonderful to see a little bird, that has no reason, show so much attachment to its mistress.'

'Yes,' said Agnes, 'it is so grateful for the seeds I give it every day.'

'And are you,' said her mother, 'equally grateful to God for all the blessings you enjoy? You see that even in this you may learn from the little bird.' And from that time Agnes never went to sleep without thanking God more fervently for the blessings and pleasures of the day.

'You dear little thing,' said Agnes, one morning, while she was sitting at her work, and the dove was watching her with its clear, innocent eyes, 'how many things I have learnt from you, and how much I have to thank you for.'

'And you have not thought,' said her mother, 'of the best thing of all. The white dove is the emblem of innocence; and our Divine Redeemer has said to us, "Be ye harmless as doves." Oh, may this holy innocence always be yours; may deceit and falsehood be always far from you, so that it may be said of you, "Agnes is as innocent and spotless as a dove."'

CHAPTER II.

Once the knight Theobald had returned from an expedition against a numerous band of robbers, which had spread terror throughout the country. Pleased with the success of his enterprise, he was sitting in the evening telling how he had taken some of the robbers prisoners and dispersed the rest, so that the country was again in peace and safety. Ottilia and Agnes had brought their spinning-wheels, and were working diligently while they listened, when the door of the room in which they were sitting opened, and a lady dressed in deep mourning, leading a little girl, also dressed in black, entered. The knight, Ottilia, and Agnes, stood up and saluted the strangers kindly.

'I hope you will forgive my intrusion, noble knight,' said she. 'Although I am a stranger to you, I have sought your protection. I am Rosalind of Hopenburg, and this is my daughter Emma. Perhaps you may have heard with what great trouble it has pleased God to visit me. My dear husband has died of the wounds which he received in battle last year, and, with him, I feel as if I had lost my all. You know how kind and good he was; he was so charitable to the poor that he has not left a large fortune behind him—for his treasure was in heaven. But now my neighbours, two avaricious knights, are trying to oppress me; one is seeking, by false

'Noble knight, be a father to me.

pretences, to possess himself of my cornfields and meadows, and the other covets my woods on the other side of the castle. They were once my husband's friends, but their covetousness has changed them into my enemies. My dear husband seemed to

foresee this, for in his last moments he named your name. "Trust in God," he said, "and seek the protection of the knight Theobald; then you will be safe from your enemies." Do not, I entreat you, refuse me your help; what will become of me and of my poor child if we are deprived of all our property, and have nothing left but the bare walls of our castle?'

The little Emma, who was about the age of Agnes, approached the knight, and said, weeping, 'Noble knight, be a father to me, and do not turn me away.'

The knight did not answer at first, but remained looking thoughtfully on the ground.

'Oh, dear father,' said Agnes, with tears, 'do have pity on them. They have come to you for shelter as my little dove did to me, and my mother says that we should never refuse to help the unfortunate. Do save them from the cruel knight, who is like the bird of prey!'

'You are quite right, my dear child,' said the knight, 'and, with God's help, I will protect them. You must not think that my silence proceeded from unkindness. I was considering the best way in which I could help this noble lady and her child.'

The knight placed a seat for the lady, and Agnes brought one for Emma, while the Lady Ottilia left the room to prepare some refreshment for the unexpected guests; for at that time it was not considered degrading for even the wife of a knight to employ herself in her kitchen.

In the meantime Sir Theobald inquired more particularly as to the claims of the two knights to the lady's property; and, having heard all, he said, 'Well, so far as I can see, you certainly have justice on your side. The first thing to-morrow morning I will go with some of my people and see, first, if we can come to some friendly arrangement. Remain here with your daughter until I return, so that you may hear at once the good news which I shall hope to bring.'

They then sat down to their supper with lightened hearts, and early the next morning Sir Theobald mounted his horse and set out attended by several of his people.

Agnes was very pleased to have the company of Emma for a few days, and showed her all her treasures, particularly her flowers and her bird. The two little girls soon became very great friends, for Emma was an amiable child, and had been well and carefully brought up by her good mother.

In a few days the knight came back. 'Good news!' he exclaimed, as he entered the room. 'Your enemies, noble lady, have given up their unjust demands, and everything is at peace again. At first my words had no effect upon them, though I tried my utmost to convince them of the injustice of their claims. But when at last I declared war upon all who attempted to do you any wrong, then they gave way; so now you may enjoy your own fields and woods in peace.'

The grateful lady thanked him with tears of joy. 'May God,' she said, 'the Protector of the widow, reward you for your goodness to me and my orphan child. May He shield you from all misfortune, and save you from all danger.'

She then prepared to return to Hopenburg. The two children shed many tears at parting, and Agnes wished to give her friend a keepsake. As Emma had often expressed a wish to have a tame dove like hers, Agnes brought the bird, and, dearly as she loved it, gave it to her friend. Emma at first did not like to take it; but, after a friendly contest, she was obliged to give way, and went away very delighted with her present.

After a little while, Agnes almost began to repent having parted with her beloved little bird. 'I wish now I had given my gold ear-rings,' she said to her mother.

'That you can do another time,' answered her mother. 'For the present, you could not have given anything so acceptable as the bird. A more costly gift would not have been so pleasing; but one which you value yourself so much is a greater proof of your love; so do not regret it. You cannot learn too soon to sacrifice your own pleasure to that of others; and you may be very sure that such sacrifices are pleasing in God's sight.'

(To be continued.)

THE MONTHS.

JANUARY brings the snow,
Makes our feet and fingers glow.
February brings the rain,
Thaws the frozen lake again.
March brings breezes loud and shrill,
Stirs the dancing daffodil.
April brings the primrose sweet,
Scatters daisies at our feet.
May brings flocks of pretty lambs,
Skipping by their fleecy dams.
June brings tulips, lilies, roses,
Fills the children's hands with posies.
Hot July brings cooling showers,
Apricots and gilliflowers.
August brings the sheaves of corn,
Then the harvest home is borne.
Warm September brings the fruit,
Sportsmen then begin to shoot.
Fresh October brings the pheasant,
Then to gather nuts is pleasant.
Dull November brings the blast,
Then the leaves are whirling fast.
Chill December brings the sleet,
Blazing fire, and Christmas treat.

SURE SIGNS.

SOLOMON said, many centuries ago, 'Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure and whether it be right.' Some people seem to think that children have no character at all. On the contrary, an observing eye sees, even in young children, the signs of what they are likely to be for life.

When I see a little boy slow to go to school, and glad of every excuse to neglect his book, I think it is a sign that he will be a dunce.

When I see a boy in haste to spend every penny as soon as he gets it, I think it is a sign that he will be a spendthrift.

When I see a boy hoarding up his pennies, and unwilling to part with them for any good purpose, I think it is a sign that he will be a miser.

When I see a boy or a girl looking out for 'number one,' and disliking to share good things with others, I think it a sign that the child will grow up a selfish person.

When I see boys and girls often quarrelling, I think it a sign that they will be violent and hateful men and women.

When I see a child obedient to his parents, I think it a sign of great future blessing from Almighty God.

When I see a boy fond of the Bible, and knowing it well, I think it a sign that he will be a good and happy man.

SCENES IN EARLY LIFE OF DAVID.

WATCHING HIS FATHER'S SHEEP.

OF all the holy men whose histories are written in the Old Testament *for our learning*, it has pleased God that we should know most about David, whom He *took from the sheep-fold* to be the king of *His people Israel*. David was born at Bethlehem in the days of Saul, the first king of Israel. This was about 1080 years before the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who also was born in the little town of Bethlehem, and who sprang from the family of this same David. Jesse, the father of David, was the grandson of Boaz and Ruth, whose history you have often heard or read. He belonged to one of the families of Judah, the tribe to which Jacob on his death-bed made great promises, the fulfilment of which was now to begin. Of David's mother we know nothing, as the Bible does not tell us even so much as her name.

The little boy—the youngest of eight sons—was his father's darling, and his name, David, means *beloved*. Perhaps it was because they were jealous of him that his brothers seem never to have treated him kindly, as elder sons and daughters ought to treat the little ones of the family. But David had three nephews, probably about his own age—Abishai, Joab, and Asahel, the sons of his sister, Zeruiah;

and these appear to have been through life his greatest friends and his most devoted followers.

David in his boyhood was useful to his father as the shepherd of his flocks; for in Palestine sheep were then, as they are now, of great value, and were exposed to many dangers from robbers and wild beasts. At this time of his life David was distinguished from other youths by his fair and ruddy countenance; and the beauty of his eyes is specially noticed (1 Sam. xvi. 12, where the margin says that he was *fair of eyes*). Altogether, he was *goodly to look to;* and his was manly beauty; for he was so swift that his *feet were like hart's feet;* he was so strong that his *arms could break even a bow of steel.* But, far better than all this, David had a warm, tender, faithful heart, that was already given to God; and strong courage, that sprang from the best of all sources—firm trust in the Almighty God, whom he loved and served.

Like other shepherds of his time, he usually carried a staff, with which to guide and control his sheep and his watch-dogs. Round his neck he wore a scrip or bag, in which to keep the food he brought from home; and in this, when it was not in use, he would keep the sling which was the Jewish shepherd's favourite weapon.

While the sheep fed peaceably on the hill-sides or in the pleasant valleys around Bethlehem, David gained great skill in playing the harp—not a heavy one, like those used in England; but a small, light one, easy to carry, and much used then and afterwards by his countrymen.

It was in these early years of his life that he first sang to his harp some of those *Songs of Zion* that have ever since been so dear to God's people, and which, though not all written by him, are generally spoken of as *the Psalms of David*—psalm being a word that means a hymn which is sung to music. Amongst those which are supposed to have been composed by David during his shepherd life are the 8th, the 19th, the 23rd, and the 29th. In the 8th he speaks about the wonderful works of Creation, especially the moon and the stars, upon which he had so often gazed when watching over his flock by night; and he tells us how the sight kept him mindful of his own littleness and of God's greatness and power.

In the 19th he tells us that the heavens are teachers that speak to all nations about their Maker; and he describes in particular the glory of *the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber.* On Christmas Day our Church uses this as one of the Proper Psalms, because Jesus Christ, whose birth we then commemorate, is the *true Sun of Righteousness* (Mal. iv. 2), and is often described under the figure of a Bridegroom (St. John, iii. 29).

The 23rd Psalm shows what happy lessons of comfort David learnt whilst tenderly guarding his sheep; and, at the same time, reminds us of the Good Shepherd of whom David was a type.

The 29th is thought to have been composed after some great thunderstorm that had swept over the land from Mount Lebanon in the north to the wilderness of Kadesh in the south; whilst David in every peal of thunder recognised *the voice of the Lord powerful and full of glory.*

Singing these and other Psalms should help us to grow more like him who wrote them. Almost every Christian child likes to sing 'psalms and hymns and songs of praise;' but too many boys and girls forget that God accepts their praises only when, like David's, they come from the heart as well as from the lips. Such hearty praises were those which were sung to the Lord Jesus by the happy children in the Temple (St. Matt. xxi. 15, 16); and we know that when His enemies were impatient to have the children silenced, Jesus answered in the words of David, 'Have ye never read, *Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise,*'—words taken from the 8th Psalm, of which we have just been speaking. And such hearty praises children now may sing at church, and school, and home, if only they will ask, day by day, for the help of God's Holy Spirit, who taught David to sing such words as these:—'*My heart is fixed, O God! my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise*' (Ps. lvii. 7). '*Because thy loving-kindness is better than life my lips shall praise Thee*' (Ps. lxiii. 3).

David .the Shepherd of his Father's Flocks.

'Winter.'

WINTER.

DREARY and cold the Winter comes,
With storms of ice and fleecy snow;
We bless the Lord for cheerful homes,
While chilling winds around us blow.

KATIE DEANE.

A STORY OF THE NEW YEAR FOR LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS.—FOUNDED ON FACT.

By H. O. H. E.

IT was Christmas time, or nearly: the time when school boys and girls run wild with joy, when they deck their houses with the holly and the laurel, and all green and pretty things. But it is a time, too, when many little boys and girls help to deck other houses than their own—the houses of GOD. And as children, who have helped to do this in the Christmas so lately passed, will have it fresh in their minds, I think it is a good time to tell them of what happened one Christmas-time, not many years ago, in a village where some dear little children joined with me in trying to make our church look more worthy of the coming Christmas-day.

The sun shone brightly the week before that Christmas-time, and the snow was on the ground, and the pretty frost sparkled on the branches of the ever-greens which the school-children brought us for our work. How merrily they scampered over the hard, frozen ground, and trod the crackling branches and crisp, dead leaves beneath their feet, as they went at my bidding for more and yet more evergreens to make the pretty wreaths and long festoons. But when they came into the church I tried to make them remember where they were, and to speak low, and to do their work as if doing it for GOD.

And here I would say a word to any little boys and girls who will read this story. If ever you help in decorating churches, do not look on it as an amusement, or as if you were working at home; but remember *where* you are, and *what* you are doing, and for *whom* you are working. Loud talking and laughing should be put aside. Work with a merry heart if you will, for it needs not to be *sad* to do GOD'S work well!

Amongst the children that were helping me on the day of which I speak, was one I loved very dearly. She was merry at heart as the merriest of them; but in *that* house she was quiet and gave me the branches of the laurel and the cypress as I wanted them to deck a pillar, without speaking; but looking up at me with a soft light in her eyes, and an expression in them, which made me say to myself, 'How altered Katie is of late!'

Presently I said, 'Go, my child, if you like and join the other children, do not stay with me unless you wish it.'

But her answer was, 'Please, Aunty, I would rather stay with you; they talk too much. I like just to help you, and be quiet, and to wonder what the angels think, if they are looking at us.'

So she and I together decked the pillar, and amidst the bright, shining leaves we placed a wreath of 'everlastings,' as the country people call them; it was made by Katie with the flowers grown in her own little garden for this very purpose.

Yes, there it was, that pretty, yellow wreath; and, as she stood to admire it, she said, 'Is it not pretty, and is it not a pretty name my golden flowers have? I like it so *much* better than the *proper* name, don't you?'

I said, 'Yes, my darling; and they may serve to remind us of those other everlastings which deck those mansions of which we read in the Bible.'

With a quick puzzled look she said, 'What everlastings do we read of in the Bible?'

'Not everlastings like yours,' I answered, smiling, 'but GOD'S flowers plucked from earth to adorn His heavenly garden: I mean the spirits of His children. We may call *them* GOD'S everlastings, for we know *they* will *never* die; but our poor flowers, bright as they look now, will fade and die at last, Katie.'

Then with a little pleased look as she caught the idea—'I will be *your* little flower *here*, Aunt Margaret;' and then in a lower tone she added, 'and I will ask GOD to let me be one of His everlastings when I die.'

The last words of her sentence—'When I die'—somehow sounded sad to me. Dear little girl, she did not know *how soon* that was to be!

Christmas-day came bright and lovely; and my little flower, as she now liked to call herself, came with me early to the church; and, whilst we were looking at the decorations, Katie whispered that 'she hoped GOD and the angels liked it.'

It all looked fresh and pretty then, and so did *my* little flower; but the wreaths she helped to make were with us longer than she. Before the bright, green leaves drooped and died, she was gone from our sight, and, whilst the everlastings still glistened amongst them here, she was gone to add another to the everlastings in heaven.

It is the custom in the village, of which I write, to keep up the Christmas decorations until the week next before Septuagesima Sunday.

Before that, aye, week upon week before that, GOD had sent for my little flower. Our clergyman often went to see Katie and to help the little maiden on her way to heaven. She was very fond of his coming, and it was touching to hear her little weak voice joining in prayer to GOD that He would take her as His child and give her a place in heaven.

Shortly before she died, I was sitting by her bed when she asked, 'Have you been to church to-day, Aunt Margaret?'

I said, 'Yes, I am just come from there, my darling.'

'And are the evergreens and my everlastings there still?' she said.

'Yes, they are still there, Katie;' and bending over her, I added, 'They are not fading as fast as *my* little flower.'

She smiled and said, 'No, I shall never see them again; but I often think, dear Aunty, of the talk we had about them when we put them there, and of what you said about GOD's everlastings; and I have asked Him many, many times to let me be one: do you think He will, Aunt Margaret?'

'I *trust* He will, my darling,' I said, through my tears, 'I have asked Him too.'

Then she said, as if the thought was comfort to her, 'Mr. Morris (naming our clergyman) says I *may hope* He will for His dear Son's sake.'

The next morning the first sound that greeted my ear was the solemn sound of the passing bell, and I knew that dear little Katie was dead. A few days more, and she and I and her little companions were in that church again; she for the last time, a pale, faded flower, in the little coffin which they had placed close by the pillar which she and I had so lately decked with leaves which still looked bright and green.

As the concluding words of the beautiful lesson, read to comfort us when our hearts are very sore, were read; as the clergyman in a faltering voice pronounced the words, 'Your labour is not in vain in the Lord,' I took Katie's wreath of everlastings, and placed it on her coffin in the sure and certain hope that even *that little labour* done, as I believed in her case it had been done, in the Lord, had not been in vain; and that the spirit of that little body, that lay there so still and cold in the coffin underneath her everlastings, was then one of GOD'S everlastings in Paradise.

Since then other Christmas days have come and gone, and one has very lately passed, and other children have done the work that Katie did at the Christmas-time of which I have been telling you. May they all have done it in the same spirit for GOD, as she did! for *they* cannot tell any more than *she* could have told, if ever they shall do it again. Do you then so act and live that, if you should be called early away, you may be one of the everlastings in Christ's beautiful Garden.

'FOR THE SAKE OF MY MOTHER.'

MR. HOOKER used to say, 'If I had no other motive for being religious, I would earnestly strive to be so *for the sake of my mother*, that I might requite her care of me, and cause her widow's heart to sing for joy.'

THE ROBIN.

ON a wintry, wintry morning,
When the white snow hid the ground,
Came a tiny little Robin,
Hopping all the garden round:

Where the prickly holly branches
And the trailing ivy grow;
Sad and weary, cold and dreary,
All alone among the snow.

At a bright and cheerful window
Sat two little girls at play;
And they watched him, and they called him;
But he swiftly flew away.

Foolish, foolish little Robin,
What a useless, vain alarm;
For they would not, and they could not,
Do him any kind of harm.

Soon again they saw him coming,
And they called to him, and said,
'Don't be frightened, little Robin;
Pretty bird with bosom red.'

And he perched upon the window,
And he answered, 'I will come;
I am hungry, very hungry,
Give me just one little crumb.'

'Welcome, welcome, pretty stranger,'
Said the little girls at play;
'We will feed you, we will tend you,
Only do not fly away.'

And the window straight they opened,
And his breakfast out they threw;
'Thank you, thank you,' said the Robin,
As he peeped, and ate, and flew.

And they heard among the holly,
All that wintry, wintry day,
'Thank you, thank you,' oft repeated,
As he sang his gentle lay.

And they seemed to hear him singing,
In his blithe and cheerful strain,
'I will try to thank you better,
When the summer comes again.'

EDITH AND ADA.

BOBBY DAWSON'S FIRST DAYS AT SCHOOL.

BY HIMSELF.

I WAS a very small boy, indeed, when I was first sent to school, but I was not aware of that fact; indeed, I thought myself a great hero—Julius Cæsar, the Black Prince, Nelson, and the Duke of Wellington, were not my superiors. At all events, I expected some day to be a greater man than any one of them. This idea, while it lasted (and that was while I was in the nursery, and its chief lord), was very pleasant, but it came rudely to an end on the very first day I went to school. I may say within the first hour. I then found many more Julius Cæsars and Black Princes, not at all disposed to acknowledge my claims to chief, or even to be an equal. It was a day-school, though a very large one—a grammar-school, I should call it, though the boys did not wear college caps, or 'mortar-boards,' as they were called.

My father took me and left me with one of the masters, by whom I was ushered into the play-ground. I felt very brave while my father was with me, but my

courage oozed out at the tips of my fingers, when I found myself standing in the midst of a number of strange boys, who did not look very kindly at me. Several asked me my name, and when I said 'Bobby,' they all laughed. I am sure that I saw nothing funny in what I had said. Then they asked me more questions, one after the other; and at last, when one boy inquired what profession I was going to be, and I replied that I was going to be a soldier, and a great general like the Duke of Wellington, they laughed still more.

A big boy, John Noakes, asked me how many Dukes of Wellington I thought there were in the world. I answered, 'There is one, I know; but I think that it is very likely there will be another.' This reply caused great merriment. Another fellow, Tom Potter, asked me if I would fight him. Why he did so I could not tell, as I had not quarrelled with him. I told him that I didn't want to fight unless he happened to be Napoleon Bonaparte, and then that of course, I would, for I knew my duty as an Englishman, and would not shrink from it. How they did laugh at me, and this sort of work went on till the school-bell rang. It might have been very good fun for them, but it was not so for me, though it would have been far worse had I got angry.

The boys thought I was witty, I fancy, but I only just said what I felt, and kept my temper. When we came out of school the same sort of joking began again, and continued for the best part of a week.

One day, one of the masters, Mr. Homer, said to me, 'Dawson, you are a steady boy. I have some valuable papers which I wish to send to your uncle. They are in this bag. I will entrust them to you, and feel sure that you will deliver them safely.' I was highly flattered with the compliment, and felt inclined to say that I would not deliver them up unless with my life, but I had an idea that Mr. Homer would laugh if I said that, so I merely promised that I would give them to my uncle. The bag was committed to my charge, and I set off as proud as a young *aide-de-camp*, who has for the first time to carry important despatches. I had not got far, however, before I caught sight of a party of the enemy, or rather of a half-dozen of the most mischievous of my schoolfellows. 'Hallo, Bobby Dawson, where are you going?' cried John Noakes. 'What have you got in that bag, Bobby?' asked Tom Potter. 'Come turn out its contents,' exclaimed another.

I had read of heroes placing their backs to a wall when assailed by superior numbers, and fighting it out bravely, so I placed my back to a wall, resolved not to yield; but before I had made up my mind what else to do, Tom Potter had seized my bag, and John Noakes had rifled it of its precious contents, which he handed to his companions who ran off shouting and laughing.

At first I was amazed and horrified at their boldness, and stood like a mummy with my mouth wide open. Recovering myself, however, quickly, I told them by whom the papers had been intrusted to me, and that I had promised to convey them safely. I appealed to their honour, to their generosity, and I did not appeal in vain. The papers were all restored to the bag, and conveyed without further accident to my Uncle Ben.

After that I rose in favour with my school-fellows, and became, I flatter myself, a favourite among them. Had I put myself in a passion, or threatened to tell Mr. Homer, or cried, and said I was afraid of being punished, I believe that the papers would have been carried off. I advise my young friends to keep their tempers, and take all bantering in good part, to be kind to others, and to give their companions credit for having the higher and nobler qualities which they themselves claim to possess. I am now a major-general. I have followed this rule through life. I never had a serious quarrel with any man, and I have a large circle of friends and acquaintances.

A REBUKE.—An American clergyman tells us of an infidel who, wishing to give a reading-lesson to two little children, wrote the words,—God is NOWHERE. The child read it, God is NOW HERE.

CATS AND DOGS.

'CAT-and-dog-life' means, you know, snapping and snarling, scratching and biting, growling and fighting; but one might just as well call it 'boy-and-girl life,' because with them it may occur as frequently, if they allow their 'angry passions,' as Dr. Watts says, to rise. In a well-regulated home this ought not to happen; but I am afraid it is often far easier to make cats and dogs agree than little brothers and sisters, and what is more to be regretted, if the former are once friends, they are friends always; while the latter break out again and again into angry words and deeds. There is not a doubt that pussies and doggies are obliged to bear and forbear with each other as much as possible, to prevent strife. It is, for instance, not at all pleasant for a dog, who has, perhaps, come home tired from a long walk with his master, and who sits comfortably warming his nose by the fire, recalling what he has seen and done, and what the other dogs that he met have said, when pussy comes and rubs herself against his forelegs, only to please herself, and, just as he is thinking rather angrily of the insults offered by a fat cur on the way, sticks her bushy tail (which she will always stick up in a most unnecessary way when she rubs herself) into his nose, tickling him very provokingly. Now it would be very natural and very soothing to his irritated feelings to roll her over on the floor, and to give her a good shaking. But you see doggie does not do so, but only stretches himself out quietly, thereby depriving pussy of her rubbing posts and by his example inducing her to lie down too. This forbearance is rewarded, because pussy, who is always fond of a warm place, crouches down and makes a most capital cushion for him to lay his head upon, just as high as the fender, and much softer.

On the other hand, fancy being a kitten, say three months old, and having had all your romps with the other kitten, who, of course, plays in a sensible, kitten-like and neat way; having succeeded in putting every hair of your fur straight; making your paws, that had got a little dusty, look quite white again; and just got your throat into a nice purr; and listening complacently with half-shut eyes to the singing of the kettle, and pleasantly dreaming of some sweet milk in a clean white saucer, which is sure to follow the singing of the kettle in about half-an-hour; when in come a boisterous pair of awkward, lubberly puppies with muddy paws, who pounce upon you, and drag you all over the floor, disordering all your hair that you have been combing so tidily, and slobbering you all over with their wet mouths. Surely that is not pleasant for any well-conditioned kitten, and very hard to bear; but still it is no use flying into a passion and spitting at them; the only way is to take the first opportunity of getting out of their reach, and if that cannot be done, to join as well as possible in the fun, till they are tired of it. The chances are, they will soon become so, and fall asleep; and then things can soon be made comfortable again, and you can sit down before the fire with the fat, warm bodies of the sleeping pups behind you, as a screen to keep off all draughts. The picture is drawn from nature, and is founded on what is by no means a rare occurrence. There are many firesides where you may see cats and dogs comfortably settled together; and if you are good children, and will not quarrel, you shall have the *Prize* every month, and you will some day get a picture of Squattie and Vixen who live at a country house in great harmony with three cats, two Poll parrots, and half-a-dozen large dogs. And where you may sometimes see birds and cats and dogs all together enjoying the kitchen fire, and eating out of the same dish.

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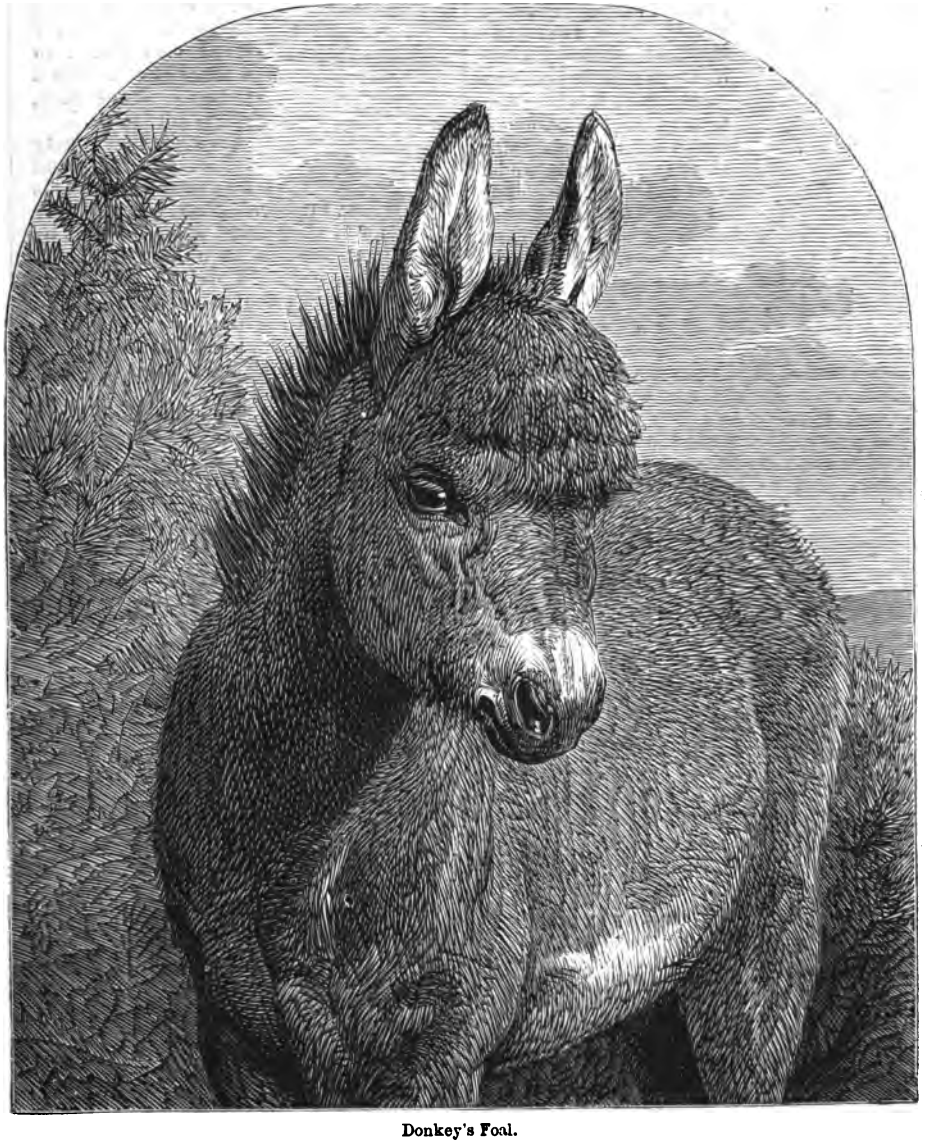


Donkey's Foal.

THE DONKEY.

OLD donkeys are very good mothers. I have never yet met with an instance of a donkey neglecting its young. Nay, they even cherish the young of other donkeys; and one can easily prove this by going to any one of the London shops where asses' milk is provided for invalids. You can there see half-a-dozen donkeys, and only one foal between them. But it is nursed by all in turns, and I have been told more than once, that unless the foal goes the donkey will not give the milk.

A donkey's foal, if at all well kept, is one of the merriest and most confiding and self-satisfied little creatures going. There is nothing he will not walk up to and touch with his soft little nose. He leads his poor mother a sad life with his pranks and the anxiety they cause her; she often gives vent to her fears in a warning, whistling-whinnying.

THE IRON BAR.

HERE is a good lesson from an iron bar. Read it, children! A bar of iron worth 1*l.*, worked into horse-shoes, is worth 2*l.*; made into needles, it is worth 70*l.*; made into pen-knife blades, it is worth 650*l.*; made into balance-springs of watches, it is worth 50,000*l.* What a drilling the poor bar must undergo to reach all that; but hammered, and beaten, and pounded, and polished, how was its value increased! It might well have quivered and complained under the hard knocks it got; but were they not all necessary to draw out its fine qualities, and fit it for higher offices?

And so, my children, all the drilling and training which you have to bear in youth, and which often seems so hard to you, serves to bring out your nobler and finer qualities, and fit you for greater usefulness in the world.

OUR VALENTINES.

WHEN I was nearly twelve years old, I was sent with my little friend Rosie Swan, whom I loved very much, to a boarding-school in a village by the sea-side, called Hurlstone.

We went ninety miles by rail, and then a coach took us five miles further. Just as we were getting weary, we heard a boy who sat by the driver blow a horn over and over again, and while he did so our hearts went pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat so hard, and we felt very much inclined to cry! For we dreaded seeing a strange governess and new schoolfellows, and thought how lonely and miserable we should be.

But when the coach stopped we were welcomed by a smiling young lady, whom the coachman called 'Miss Walter.' That was the name of our new governess. She took our hands in hers, and said, 'We are so glad to see you, dears.' So kindly she said it, that my heart at least did not pit-a-pat again, nor did I feel shy or sad any more, except just when I said my prayer at bedtime, the thought of papa and mamma, and how far I was away from them, made the tears come, for I loved them very much!

In the morning we saw two more governesses, they were sisters to Miss Walter; their mother had been dead some years, and so they took care of a little brother who was only six years old; and an older brother, called 'Mr. Edward,' lived with them too.

We saw very quickly that it was a loving family and a happy home; and we were all taught together carefully every morning and evening, from some part of the Bible, before we joined in family prayers. Often, too, our elder governess took us one by one into her private room, and talked to us about 'One' above, and Jesus, who has so sweetly promised that those who seek Him early shall find Him.

Do not think that we had a dull life at Hurlstone. No, we spent our play-hours most merrily, and had plenty of fun, and pleasant walks on the cliffs, where we sometimes heard wonderful tales from the old seamen who were there looking through their large telescopes. Some of them had gone out at different times in the life-boats, and they showed us their cork clothes, and told us we could never picture, if we had not seen it, what a real rough sea was, and that a strong gale would frighten us perhaps when we first heard it. Then we had happy evenings in the school-room when our lessons were done. Rosie, my first friend, was very happy, and so was I, and we liked our new schoolfellows very well indeed.

When we had been at Miss Walter's three weeks, Valentine's Day was near—and one night Fanny Reade said, 'I say, girls, to-morrow is Valentine—good morrow, Valentine.'

'Oh,' said Carrie Newton, 'we shan't know it, for Miss Walter is sure to say valentines are silly things.'

'Will she though? and if she does, if my brother Fred sends me one, I'll read it and keep it, or ask mamma to send me to another school, I will,' said Mary Foxe.

But this talking all stopped then, for we heard Miss Walter's step on the stairs, and we jumped into bed in a great hurry. In the morning Mary Foxe had her valentine from Fred, and Carrie had one from her cousin, and there were several more besides on the breakfast-table, and they were given out amongst us directly. After prayers Miss Walter said, 'Young ladies, you need only study till noon to-day; can you make the rest of the time happy as a holiday?'

'Oh, yes, thank you.' And we did too.

Well, afternoon came and passed, with games in the shrubbery and cosy chats by the fireside; and after tea, when we were sitting round the fire chatting faster still and noisily, there came such a thundering rap at the hall-door.

'Is it the postman?'

'The post at seven o'clock, Carrie! where are your senses?'

In walks the maid Morley, with a parcel, 'For *you*, please, Miss Reade;' inside, a pretty cotton box labelled 'Valentine.' Then another knock, and as we listened we heard Morley call cook, and give her a parcel, and we also heard (though we had no business) such laughter from the kitchen, that we could not rest till we heard what cook's gift could be—it was a scrubbing-brush! The raps kept on, nearly every ten minutes; Mary Foxe had a box of perforated note-paper enough to print fifty valentines upon; Eveline Gray, a silver thimble; Carrie Newton, a paint-box; Rosie Swan, a reticule; little Ernest Walter, a penknife (for which he sent the postman a farthing!); Mr. Edward, a silver pencil-case—and I, Fanny Franks, a workbox of fancy German make.

Now, can you picture what fun it was, and how we kept guessing who could be such a kind friend, and whether it was one good fairy or more? While we were puzzling the supper-bell rang, and then we had prayers. We all liked prayers, for though it was such a happy household, we were often cross and disobedient, and selfish and unhappy in consequence. So when we knelt to 'Our Father,' and said the words together, it made us feel how wrong we were, and how true it was when Miss Walter told us, that if we would but try in all things to please Jesus, we should have a happy life.

After prayers Miss Walter said, 'Dear little girls, my sisters, and myself have sent you your valentines this evening: we have been happy in making you so; and we wished you to have something to mark your holiday, so we have tried to put it to some good use for you. God it is who gives us all things richly to enjoy, and He has made me feel to-night, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Will *you* thank Him for all your pleasures, and to-night learn how easy it is to make other happy if you try?'

Dear young readers, I shall never forget that happy way of getting valentines. I have kept mine, many years; can you not send such as those *we* had amongst your little friends, and then you will be wisely spending your money and coining love too?

FANNY FRANKS.

THE LITTLE DOVE.

(*Continued from page* 5.)

CHAPTER III.

FOR some time the Lady Rosalind lived with her daughter in peace and contentment in their old castle, which was situated near a woody mountain. One evening there came two pilgrims to the castle door, and begged for a night's lodging. They wore the dark dress of pilgrims, each carried a staff in his hand, and had in their hats the cockle-shell usually worn by pilgrims. The Lady Rosalind ordered them to be taken to a lower room and well entertained. After supper, she and Emma went down to see them, and remained for some time listening to their account of the Holy Land.

Emma was particularly interested in all she heard, and regretted that she was never likely to see the land in which our Redeemer lived and died.

'My dear Emma,' said her mother, 'if we only listen to our Saviour's teaching, and try to follow His example, we shall have the Holy Land in our own hearts. If all men listened to His words, and tried more earnestly to imitate His holy life, the whole world would become a Holy Land!'

The pilgrims made many inquiries about the neighbouring country, particu-

Relating their Account of the Holy Land.

larly about the Castle of Falkenburg. They expressed the greatest respect for Sir Theobald. 'If his castle were not so far out of the way,' said the elder of the pilgrims, 'and if I could hope to find him at home, I would certainly pay him a visit.' Rosalind assured him that the castle was not out of their way, and that the knight was most likely to be at home, having returned from an excursion only

two days ago. 'I am delighted to hear that,' said the pilgrim. 'It will give me much pleasure to see him, as I have many things to say to him. We will start quite early to-morrow morning.'

The mother and daughter sent many kind messages to the family at Falkenburg, and Emma begged them to say that the little dove was quite well. Supposing from the words of the pilgrims that they did not know the way, the lady ordered a servant-boy to be ready early in the morning to guide them through the wood, and, wishing them a good night, took a courteous leave of them.

Early the following morning the pilgrims set out, accompanied by the boy, of whom they took no notice, but pursued their way in silence over the mountainous path. When the road became smoother they began to talk to each other in Italian. The boy who was guiding them was an Italian, his real name was Leonardo, though he was known in the castle as Lienhard. The knight Adalrich had met with him in Italy as a poor orphan boy, and out of compassion had taken him with him to Germany. Although he had learnt to speak German perfectly, he had not forgotten his own language. He was just going to express his pleasure at hearing his native tongue, when he was startled and horrified by some words from one of the pilgrims.

He listened for a few minutes, and soon found from their words that they were not true pilgrims, but had adopted the dress as a disguise; that they were perfectly acquainted with that part of the country; that they belonged to the band of robbers which Sir Theobald had dispersed, and were determined to be revenged upon him; that they intended making their way into the castle under pretence of asking for a night's lodging, murdering the knight with his wife and child in the night, and then plundering and setting fire to the castle.

As they approached Falkenburg, and saw the fortress in the distance, the elder of the robbers, named Lupo, said to his companion, Orso, 'There is the hateful dragon's nest, the home of the man who has brought so many of our people to the scaffold. He shall suffer for it now; we will bind him hand and foot, and leave him to perish in the flames of his castle.'

'It is a dangerous undertaking,' said the other. 'If it fails, so much the worse for us. However, the knight's treasures are worth the risk.'

'To me the thought of punishing him is sweeter than all his riches, though *they* are not to be despised,' said Lupo. 'If we succeed we shall be rich, and can give up our employment and live in comfort. We will put on the knight's handsomest clothes; you shall wear his gold chain, and I his knight's cross, with precious stones. Then we will escape into some foreign country, where we shall be taken for two great lords.'

'That would be splendid,' said Orso; 'still I can't help feeling anxious.'

'What have you to be anxious about?' said Lupo. 'Is not everything in readiness? Have we not accomplices enough at hand? As soon as we light three tapers in the pilgrims' room, according to our agreement, seven brave fellows who are watching for the sign will come to our help. We can let them in through the garden door, which is easily opened from the inside. One of them, who lived there once as a groom, knows all the ways of the castle, and surely nine of us can soon manage a few sleeping men. No—no, there is no fear but that we shall succeed.'

The boy Leonardo shuddered as he listened to these dreadful words; but he was careful not to let it appear that he understood. He walked quietly on, praying silently, but earnestly, that God would frustrate these villanous schemes; at the same time making up his mind to go to Falkenburg and tell all to Sir Theobald.

While the pilgrims were still talking over their plans, the elder one missed his footing, and was only saved from falling over a precipice by a thorn-bush, in which his clothes caught. The thorns tore his pilgrim's dress, and Leonardo saw that he wore a scarlet jacket and a bright steel cuirass under his dark dress. A dagger also fell from his side; he picked it up quickly and drew his mantle together,

looking sharply at the frightened boy, who appeared quite unconscious of what was passing.

Presently they came to a deep rocky pass, through which a mountain stream rushed; a tall fir-tree had been cut down and laid across, affording a dangerous footway. As they approached, the elder robber said in Italian to his companion, 'This boy may have seen that I am armed, and his suspicions may have been aroused. As soon as he is on the bridge I will push him into the stream below, then we shall be quite safe.'

The poor boy shuddered as he heard these words. He stood still, a few paces from the bridge, and said, 'I dare not go over, it makes me giddy.'

'Don't be afraid, boy,' said the elder robber; 'come here and I will carry you over.' He went towards the boy, but Leonardo drew back, crying with pretended fear.

'Let me go back,' he said, trembling. 'We might both fall; and even if you took me over safely, how should I get back again? Let me go home; it is not far from Falkenburg, and you cannot miss your way now.'

The younger robber was not at all surprised at the boy's fear, as he did not himself much like the look of the bridge. 'You may depend upon it that simple boy has seen nothing,' said he; 'and even if he had seen your armour, what matter? He cannot understand what we say, and who would pay any attention to what such a child might say? Let the poor little wretch go.'

'As you will,' said the other. 'But for greater security we will destroy the bridge; then if the boy knows all he cannot hinder us, for there is no other bridge for miles, and it would not be possible for any one to reach Falkenburg before we have finished our work.'

The men then crossed over, leaving the boy standing, and when they had reached the other side, Lupo cried out loudly, 'You are right, boy, the bridge is very dangerous, and quite rotten with age. It will be better to destroy it at once, and then a safer one must be made.'

They then loosened the narrow bridge, and it fell splashing into the abyss, and was carried away by the rapid stream. As soon as the pretended pilgrims were out of sight, Leonardo ran at his full speed to carry the dreadful news to his mistress.

(*To be continued.*)

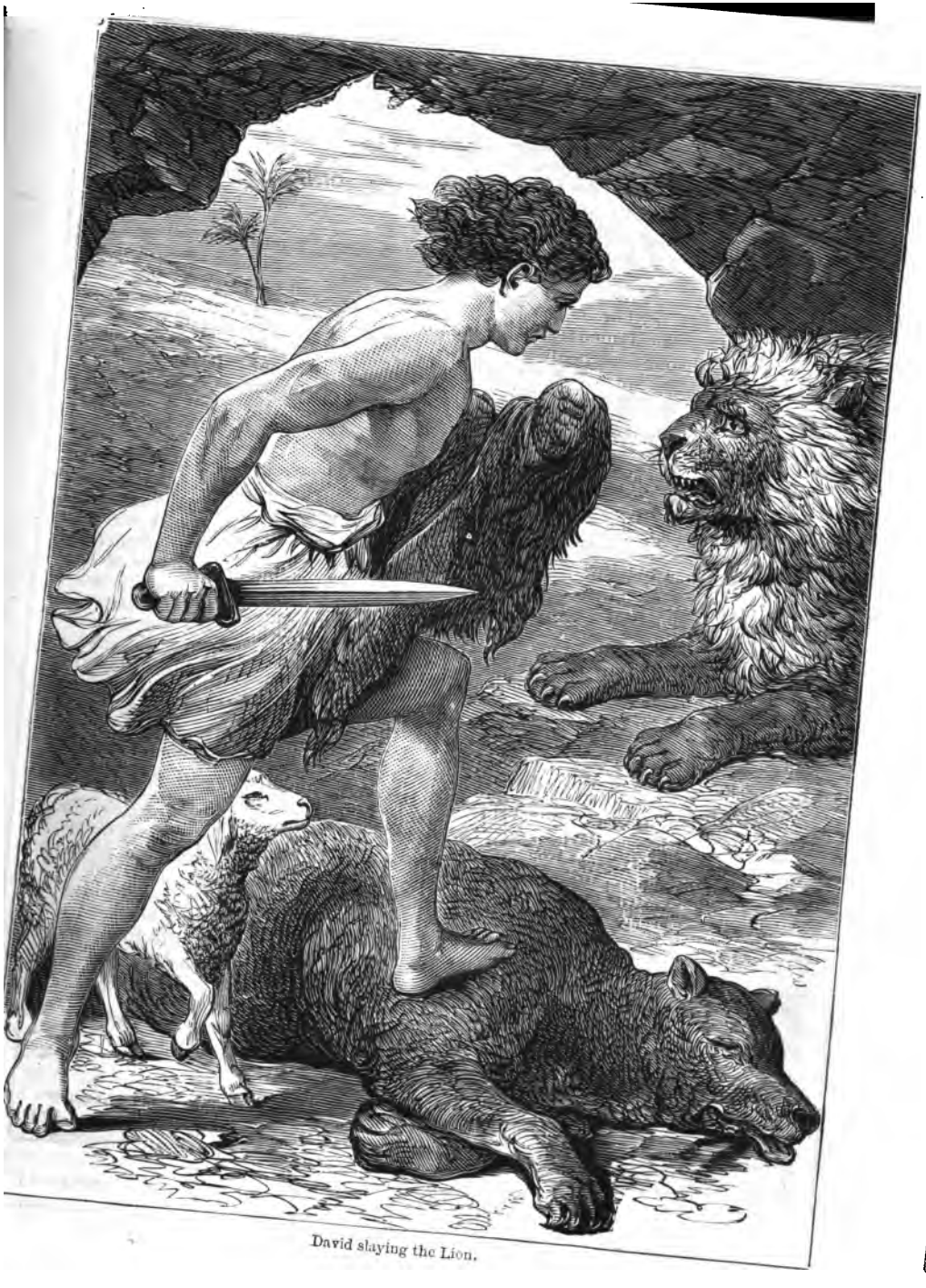
MOSES ON MOUNT NEBO.

WHEN Moses, the great leader and lawgiver of Israel, had brought God's people to the very borders of Canaan, the Lord told him that he must go up to Mount Nebo, and die there.

Moses was then one hundred and twenty years old; but his eye was not dim, nor his strength failing. He was not allowed to go into the promised land because he had sinned, and had not honoured God when He brought water from the rock in Kadesh (Numbers xx. 7–12); yet, as Moses had repented of his sin, God told him to go up to the top of Mount Nebo that he might see the promised land, though he was not to set his foot in it. And when Moses had spoken to all the people for the last time—had repeated many of God's laws—had taught them a beautiful song of praise (Deut. xxxii.)—had given them his dying blessing (Deut. xxxiii.)—and '*had laid his hands*' on Joshua that he might have '*the spirit of wisdom*' and be a wise, brave leader of the men of Israel in his place—then Moses went up alone *to the Mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah; and the Lord showed him all the land*, with its hills and valleys, its rivers and streams, its corn-fields and vineyards, its cities and villages. And when Moses had thus seen the land of Canaan, which his people were soon to possess, then he lay down and died on that lonely mountain-top; and the Lord *buried him in a valley in the land of Moab; but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.*

Moses.

We are not told in the Bible why God thus hid the grave of Moses; but we may guess that it was that the children of Israel might not worship his bones, o



David slaying the Lion.

up an idol at his grave. At least, we know that Satan, for some evil end, wished to possess the corpse of Moses, for in the Epistle of St. Jude we read that *Michael the Archangel, contending with the devil, disputed about the body of Moses.*

There is a truly grand poem on 'The Death of Moses,' by a living poetess, the wife of a bishop of our Church, who has also written the sweet 'Hymns for Little Children,' which all our readers know, or ought to know. Here are a few verses from the poem on 'The Death of Moses:'—

'By Nebo's lonely mountain,
On this side Jordan's wave,
In a vale in the land of Moab,
There is a lonely grave.
And no man knows that sepulchre,
And no man saw it e'er,
For the angel of God upturn'd the sod,
And laid the dead man there.

* * * * * * *

And had he not high honours,—
The hill-side for a pall,
To lie in state while angels wait,
With stars for tapers tall;
And the dark rock-pines, like tossing plumes,
Over his bier to wave;
And God's own hand in that lonely land,
To lay him in the grave?

In that strange grave without a name,
Whence his uncoffined clay
Shall break again, O wondrous thought!
Before the Judgment-Day;
And stand, with glory wrapt around,
On the hills he never trod;*
And speak of the strife that won our life,
With the Incarnate Son of God.

O lonely grave in Moab's land!
O dark Beth-Peor's hill!
Speak to these curious hearts of ours,
And teach them to be still.
God hath His mysteries of grace—
Ways that we cannot tell;
He hides them deep, like the hidden sleep
Of him he loved so well.'

* Namely, on the Mount of Transfiguration, where *Moses and Elias appeared in glory, and spake* to Jesus *of His decease, which He should accomplish at Jerusalem* (St. Luke, ix. 30, 31).

SCENES IN EARLY LIFE OF DAVID.

DAVID SLAYING THE LION AND THE BEAR.

WE must not fall into the mistake of supposing that David's shepherd life was all spent in prayer and praise to God while his sheep fed safely in their pasture. On the contrary, there was a great deal to be endured and to be done for his flock, and we may be sure that he did it with all his might. There was quite enough to tax to the utmost his stout heart, and strong arm, and fleet foot, and watchful eye, and to call forth all his self-denial and his presence of mind in the hour of danger. Indeed this part of his life was a good preparation for the duties which were in store for him as a warrior and a king. Taking care of a flock seemed so small a matter that his eldest brother, a soldier in Saul's army, taunted him with having only the charge of *a few sheep in the wilderness.* But David in his youth was *faithful in that which was least,* and, therefore, in his manhood, he was *faithful also in much.*

There are many passages of Holy Scripture which describe a shepherd's duties in the land of Palestine, and these, when put together, show us what David had to do. We will describe, first, a day on which his flocks were pastured near home. In the morning he led them forth from the fold in which they had passed the night, and this he did by going before them and calling them by name, as we call to dogs in England. If there were any sick or feeble in the flock, he watched and waited for them; and if there was any young lamb for which the way was too long or too rough, he carried it carefully on his shoulders or in his arms. When he arrived at the place where they were to stay during the day, he watched over them during the scorching heat, and when they needed water he led

them either to the side of a brook or to troughs fixed near wells that were too deep for the sheep to reach. If any strayed from the rest, he had to search carefully until he found it, and this was often a long and toilsome business. In the cool of the evening he led them back to their fold, and, as they passed through the opening or door, he counted them to see that none were missing. Then all night long, unless some one was sent to take his place, he watched the entrance to the fold, which was quite open to the sky; and though the days are bright and hot in Palestine, the nights are often cold.

And in these night-watches all the shepherd-boy's vigilance was needed to protect his sheep from the attacks of beasts of prey, such as lions, wolves, and bears, which came creeping forth in search of food at nightfall.

Sometimes, when the shepherd was a hireling—a man *paid* to mind the flock—he fled when he saw the wolf coming, and thus left the helpless sheep to their fate. But the owner, or one of his sons, would rather lay down his life than leave them to be devoured by the wolf.

David, still a shepherd-boy, told Saul how he had risked his life in a struggle with two wild beasts at once; and this he related, not boastfully, but to show that he was fit to undertake what Saul thought it folly in him to attempt. *Thy servant*, said he, *kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock*; *And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard* (mane), *and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear*. And then he added, knowing it was the Lord who had taught his *hands to war, and his fingers to fight* against these fierce, strong animals, *the Lord delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear*.

Sometimes there was no grass left near Bethlehem, and then David had to take the sheep to pastures two or three days' journey from home. It would often happen that on their way, while he was leading them by a winding path over the steep hill-side, one or two sheep, tempted by a tuft of herbage, would stray into dangerous places, from which they could be rescued only by the most patient care and at the risk of David's life. Then, too, sometimes he had to fight in defence of his flock, for in places far from towns robbers used to lurk in clefts of the rocks, or come boldly from their homes in the desert on one side, or, perhaps, from the cities of the Philistines on the other, and try to carry off sheep by climbing over the folds at night.

In all this David was a type, that is, a picture given beforehand, of our blessed Lord, who said, *I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. . . . I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine, . . . and I lay down my life for the sheep.* And now, at God's right hand in heaven, He is still our *chief Shepherd*. He gathers us into His earthly fold at our baptism, leads us by His Holy Spirit, if we will but follow Him, in safe and pleasant paths, and when we wander into crooked ways of sin and folly, He seeks us with most patient care. He feeds us with *the bread of life*, and gives us *living water* to drink. He protects us by His grace from our enemies—'the world, the flesh, and the devil,' and longs to bring us through all dangers into the safety of His eternal fold above.

Because the good Shepherd gave His life for us, ought we not to give our lives, our whole selves, to Him? Because He leads us so lovingly, ought we not to try and 'follow the blessed steps of His most holy life?' And because it grieves Him when we wander from the *narrow way which leadeth unto life* eternal, ought we not to grieve when we fall into sin, and ought we not to cry to Him to come to us, and forgive us, and help us?

'O Shepherd good! we follow,
And trust in Thee for all,
To guide us, and to feed us,
And raise us when we fall.
Thy voice, in life so mighty,
In death shall make us bold;
Oh, bring us altogether
In one eternal fold.'

WATERCRESS! fine watercress!
My cress I took
From shallow brook,
Some miles away,
At break of day,
While slumbering in your beds you lay.
Bunches a penny—some at less—
Buy my cress, my watercress.

Watercress! fine watercress!
Far, far from home
Have I to roam,
To gain some bread.
And keep the bed
Whereon my mother lies dead—dead!
Bunches a penny—some at less—
Buy my cress, my watercress.

'Suddenly Captain Jack began to chatter.'

CAPTAIN JACK.

CAPTAIN JACK wore a red coat—at least he did when I knew him; but though such is the colour of many English soldiers' uniforms, so it is also that of huntsmen, postboys, and of the Queen's footmen, and I have not quite made up my mind to which of these Captain Jack bore the greatest likeness. I do not think that any of them would have been much flattered by having a comparison made between him and them.

The fact is, that though Captain Jack wore a red coat he also wore a tail, which belonged not to his coat, but to himself; and he had four hands, at least he used his feet as freely as his hands. He had hair on his face as well as on his head; but he was not peculiar in that respect, and he had a very, very ugly face, which was not improved when he was angry; and in that respect also he was not peculiar. He could climb with wonderful agility, either up a tree or to the top of the house, using his feet and hands, and also his tail. Perhaps by this time it may be suspected that Captain Jack was not an officer of the dragoons, nor yet of light infantry; but a monkey. Our brother Tom, who was a midshipman, brought

him home from Africa, and presented him to sister Susan.

Jack was then very small, and timid, and modest, and had all the ways of a little child, and not so ugly either. Susan was very fond of brother Tom, and used to pet Captain Jack for Tom's sake. Tom called him Captain Jack, and so she would not change his name. Tom very soon after he brought Captain Jack home went again to sea, and the ship was lost, somewhere in the South Pacific I fancy, and the news came home that all hands had been lost; that is, that everybody on board had been drowned.

It was very, very sad, and that made Susan pet poor Tom's gift more than ever. I have often heard people say when we were children, that if we were petted we should be spoilt; and so, I suppose, petting spoilt Captain Jack, for he used to take all sorts of liberties, and if any one ventured to correct him he would snap at them and bite them too. A certain Major Morland used to come to the house very often at this time, and Captain Jack grew jealous of him, and used to try and bite him. Susan is now Mrs. Morland, I may observe.

One day Captain Jack was sitting on Susan's worsted frame, and Susan was talking to him about the Major, for the Major had gone away and was not expected back for some time. Suddenly Captain Jack began to chatter, and looking up she saw him grinning horribly, and evidently about to spring off his perch. Before she could turn her head he had sprung forward—but with a loud shriek he quickly sprang back again, and bounded through the open window and up a tree. 'I hope that I have not hurt the poor brute,' said a voice, and there stood Major Morland. He had gained a victory, and Captain Jack never again attempted to bite him.

Sister Susan was very glad to see the Major, and forgave him for boxing the Captain's ears, which I thought rather strange at the time, seeing how fond she was of Captain Jack.

After this Captain Jack took to playing all sorts of tricks. When any fine articles of ladies' dress were left out to dry after being washed, Jack was very apt to run off with them and hang them out on the ends of the topmost boughs of the highest trees, where nobody could get at them. On such occasions Jack would grin and chatter more than ever, and run about among the boughs as if highly proud of his performance. Once he got into the nursery and tried to carry off the baby—so the nursemaid said—but I think that was malice, as the baby was as big as he was nearly. He, however, did run off with a kitten, which he carried to the top of the house, where poor Tabby couldn't get, and the poor creature was very nearly starved before it could be recovered.

Unfortunately for Captain Jack, he was observed paying a stealthy visit to the larder, and from that time forth if beefsteaks or mutton-chops, or pork-chops, or even if half-legs of mutton vanished, he got the credit of taking them. I don't believe he ever ate a piece of meat in his life, though he was fond of apples and nuts. At last the complaints of his misdeeds became so numerous that he was condemned to perpetual banishment. He was put into a cart, and the groom was driving away when he saw before him a young lad in rags and tatters. The lad looked at Captain Jack very hard, and Captain Jack began to jump about and to try to break the string which fastened him into the cart. He succeeded, and with one bound sprang into the lad's arms.

'Hillo, where are you going with that monkey?' asked the groom, who was a new servant.

'Home,' answered the lad. 'He's mine.'

Who do you think the beggar-boy was? Why, brother Tom. He had not been drowned, but had been thrown on a desert island, and had gone through all sorts of adventures, and had found his way home at last. He was present at Susan's wedding, and he taught Captain Jack to behave very well ever afterwards.

THE HOMES OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

OH! bright are the mansions prepared by the Lord
For those who obey Him, and trust in His word.
No longer on earth, He is hid from our sight,
In the house of His Father, that dwelling of light.
And there has provided a glorious abode,
And made it the home of the children of God.

This earth, we are sure, cannot long be our rest;
Our places by others must soon be possessed:
And therefore has Jesus those mansions prepared
For all who believe what His word has declared;
Who tread the strait path all His people have trod,
And seek the bright home of the children of God.

There Christ, the Good Shepherd, His people will feed;
To fountains of waters His flock He will lead.
No more shall they hunger—the Lord will provide
For those whom in mercy and love He shall guide
Through death's gloomy vale, with His staff and His rod,
And give them a home with the children of God.

No night shall be there, and no death, nor decay;
All tears from their faces will God wipe away.
No friend shall depart, and no enemy come,
To trouble that peaceful enjoyment of home.
This earth for a season must be our abode,
But heaven is the home of the children of God.

EUSTACE CONDER.

THE WILLOW, POPPY, AND VIOLET.

A CHILD held in his hand a slight, leafless bough. It was like a supple, green wand. But it had been newly cut from the parent-stock, and life stirred in its little heart.

He sought out a sheltered spot, and planted it in the moist earth. Often did he visit it, and, when the rains of summer were withheld, he watered it at the cool sunset.

The sap, which is the blood of plants, began to flow freely through its tender vessels. Seasons passed over it, and it became a tree. Its slender branches drooped downward to the earth. The cheering sun smiled upon them; the happy birds sang to them; but it drooped still.

'Tree, why art thou always so sad and drooping? Am not I kind unto thee?' But it answered not; only, as it grew on, it drooped lower and lower; for it was a Weeping Willow.

The boy cast seed into the soft garden mould. When the time of flowers came, a strong, budding stalk stood there, with coarse, jagged leaves. Soon a full red poppy came forth, glorying in its gaudy dress. At its feet grew a purple violet, which no hand had planted or cherished. It lived lovingly with the mosses, and with the frail flowers of the grass, not counting itself more excellent than they.

'Large Poppy, why dost thou spread out thy scarlet robe so widely, and drink up all the sunbeams from my lowly violet?'

But the flaunting flower replied not to him who planted it. It even seemed to open its rich mantle still more broadly, as though it would have stifled its humble neighbours. Yet nothing hindered the fragrance of the meek violet.

The little child was troubled, and at the hour of sleep he spake to his mother of the tree that continually wept and of the plant that overshadowed its neighbour. So she took him on her knee, and spoke so tenderly in his ear that he remembered her words when he became a man:—

'There are some who, like the willow, are weepers all their lives long, though they dwell in pleasant places, and the fair skies shine upon them in love. And there are others who, like the poppy that thou reprovest, are proud at heart and despise the humble, whom God regardeth.

'Be not thou like them, my gentle child; but keep ever in thy breast the sweet

'He spake to his mother.'

spirit of the lowly violet, that thou mayest come at last to that blessed place which pride cannot enter, and where the sound of weeping is unknown.'—*Mrs. Sigourney.*

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. III.] MARCH, 1869. [One Penny.

The Young Rabbit.

ONE MAN'S MEAT ANOTHER MAN'S POISON.

THERE was a young Rabbit who lived in a hole,
Near to which there resided a grandfather Mole,
And one day this young Rabbit scratched into the loam,
And broke through the wall of his neighbour's snug home.
He 'd been taught by his mother, 't was wrong to be rude,
So he said, ' Mr. Mole, sir, I fear I intrude ;
But in making a new room I had no idea
That the side of your mansion was so very near ;
I hope that you kindly will take no offence,
As I'll build it up firmly before I go hence ;
But perhaps you 'll allow me one question to ask,
And I then will proceed to accomplish my task.
I have lived all my life here, or somewhere around,
But I 've never yet seen you come out of the ground ;
And once my old mother, when I missed our hole,
Said, " Bunny, my boy, you 're as blind as a Mole."
Now, if this, sir, is true, and you cannot see,
How you can get food here astonishes me.
I grieve for your lot, which is cheerless and sad,
And if I could help you should truly be glad.'
' You're a well-bred young Rabbit,' the old Mole replied ;
' The fact that you speak of cannot be denied.
I have been *almost* blind from the day of my birth,
As are all of my species who live 'neath the earth.
We are not *quite* blind, though we cannot see well,
But that is made up by a keen sense of smell ;
And as worms and as beetles, who form our chief prey,
Have no better sight to get out of our way,
We find no more trouble our living to earn
Than you, Mr. Rabbit, who all things discern.
We have also a friend in the Thrush, when at dawn
He goes tapping about in the field or the lawn,
For the worms taking fright try to dive down below,
When we smell them and catch them before they can go.
You might think in the winter that we should be lost
When the ground is so hard with the ice and the frost ;
But beforehand we make a small basin of clay,
Where we keep in reserve a good larder of prey,
We nibble the worms to prevent their retreat,
So whenever we 're hungry, there's something to eat ;
I cannot imagine how ever you bear
The heat and the daylight, the sunshine and glare ;
You are welcome, I 'm sure, to come into my room,
When you need a cool shelter of darkness and gloom ;
And here is a lesson you may bear in mind,
Some folks who can see are worse off than the blind ;
Let us make the best use of the blessings we 've got,
And be always contented whatever our lot,
So you with sharp eyesight, and I with keen smell,
May be both of us happy, and cheerful, and well.'
Then the Mole turned to sleep, and the Rabbit retired.
And his neighbour's sagacity greatly admired.
As he popped from his hole to himself he did say,
' There are some enjoy sleep, while some others like play.
But I'm sure my friend Mole is exceedingly wise,
And knows more than I do, although I have eyes.
I will take his advice—and tell all my relations—
We must be contented, whatever our stations,
It is foolish and useless to wish for a change,
For all things are better than we could arrange ;
And to pity another may sometimes be rude,
For what's poison to one, to another is food.'

F. S. G.

THE SNOWBALL.

IT was winter-time, and many poor little children were running along in the cold on their way to school. Day after day they trotted along, with blue hands and red noses, often having to breakfast on a crust of dry bread.

Among these were two little sisters, Katie and Jessie Lannen. On their way they came up with some boys who were busy making snowballs. These boys were not poor like themselves, but well fed and well dressed, yet, notwithstanding these comforts, they were not good boys, and delighted in teasing other people; not that they *meant* to be unkind, but because they were thoughtless.

So, as soon as they saw little Katie and Jessie coming, they said, 'Here comes some one, let's begin.' No sooner had the little girls passed, than a big ball came whizzing after them, and a great cloud of snow covered Katie.

Suddenly a big boy came running up; he was only a poor man's son, but he had a noble heart, both strong and tender, and he never hurt any one willingly, at least not women or little girls. So he ran up to the boys, and said in an angry voice, 'Leave the little girls alone, they're my sisters!'

'And who are you?' asked the boys, laughing.

'Somebody from Rag-fair,' said one, for the poor boy's clothes were thin and much worn, besides being rather too small for him.

Jack checked the angry answer that rose to his lips, and only said as he turned away, 'Now mind, young sirs, and leave those little girls alone.'

He took hold of his little sisters' hands and went off, but presently a ball hard and frozen was thrown at Jack, which, instead of reaching him, struck little Jessie, oh, such a blow, that she fell down off the pavement, and knocked her head against a rough stone. She gave a scream, and then lay quite still, while the white snow began to change its colour, for a crimson stream was flowing over it, from little Jessie's head. You may imagine how frightened every one was; most of the boys ran away; only one, the one who had thrown the ball, came and helped Jack to lift up his little sister. And do you think Jack would let him touch the little one, whom he had just so nearly killed? Oh, yes, for Jack knew how dreadfully he must be suffering in his mind, and, besides that, he admired him for staying behind after all the others had gone.

They took Jessie to a farm close by, where Jack who worked with the master was well known, and, while Jack went to fetch their mother, the other boy ran for the doctor.

For many days she remained ill, and at last a fever set in. The poor little girl became quite delirious, and talked and cried without knowing what she was doing. She would often sit up in bed, repeating the hymns she had learnt in the Sunday-school, particularly that one beginning,—

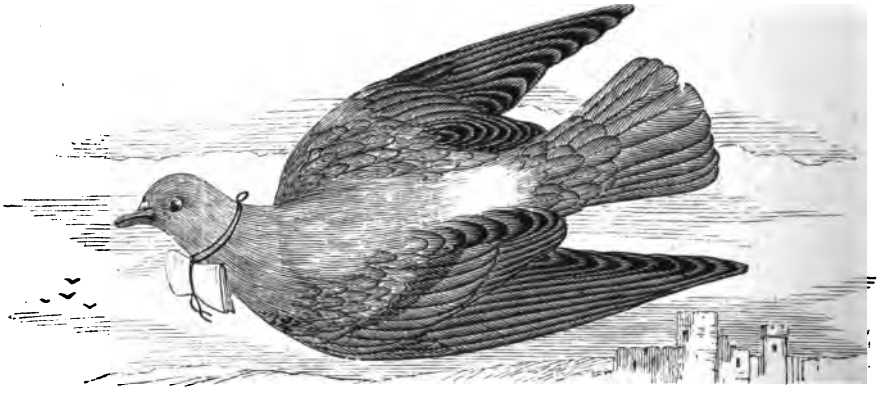
'Oh, little child, lie still and sleep,'

of which she had been very fond. And did she ever get better? Alas, no! Her fall had hurt her head too badly, and soon the poor family had to gather round the death-bed of their darling. She had become quite sensible, and sometimes spoke in a low voice to her mother, telling her not to be unhappy, for she was going to Jesus.

Charlie Percy, the boy who had thrown that terrible snowball, was there too; he was too miserable to stay away, and the dear child spent her last moments in trying to comfort him.

Charlie was ever after an altered boy; his parents' grief was very great, and they took special care of the poor family. Yet they could not replace the little lost one, who had been rendered doubly dear by her sweet loving ways and the attention she required, for she had always been frail and delicate.

Years and years after, when Katie and Jack were grown up and had farms and families of their own, they would tell their children the favourite story of little Jessie, who was killed by the snowball.



THE LITTLE DOVE.

(*Continued from p.* 23.)

CHAPTER IV.

IN the meantime Lady Rosalind and Emma, having no suspicion of the danger which threatened their friend and protector, remained quietly at home, busy with their usual employments.

In the cool of the evening they went down into the valley to visit their fields.

All of a sudden Leonardo, heated with running, and quite out of breath, hastened towards them. 'Oh, my lady!' he exclaimed; 'the two men are not pilgrims, but robbers and murderers. They are going to murder Sir Theobald and his family, and plunder and burn the castle.' The boy was so exhausted that he could say no more, but sunk down panting for breath, and almost fainting.

Rosalind and Emma were dreadfully distressed at this news. 'Oh, Emma,' exclaimed her mother; 'run at once to the castle, I will follow with this poor boy as soon as he can move. Call all the people together. They must set out for Falkenburg immediately, and warn our friends. Tell them to make all possible haste, and not to spare the horses.'

Emma hastened up the steep hill, and reached the castle door. All the people of the castle hastened to the courtyard, while Emma in a few words told of the danger which threatened Falkenburg.

After a little while the Lady Rosalind came in with Leonardo, from whom she had learned further particulars on the way.

'Why are you standing here?' she exclaimed. 'Mount at once and hasten away.'

'It is impossible, my lady,' said the old master of the horse. 'The two villains have too much the start of us; they have most likely reached Falkenburg before now. The carriage way is fifteen leagues, and it is almost evening. The best horse could not reach Falkenburg before daybreak, our farm-horses are useless for riding, and since our dear master's death our war-horses are all sold.'

The lady clasped her hands in despair, while tears flowed from her eyes. 'There is no help but in God,' she said; then turning again to her servants, she exclaimed: 'Oh, my good people, however difficult, almost impossible it may be, do, I entreat you, make the attempt. A few words will save many lives; all may depend on a few minutes. If Leonardo were not so exhausted he might go. But you, Martin,' she said, turning to a young servant, 'you are a quick runner. The footpath is a third of the way nearer. I will give you a hundred gold pieces if you reach Falkenburg in time.'

'It is impossible, my lady,' said the youth. 'Nobody could find the narrow footpath across the mountains without danger of falling down the precipices.'

'Besides, said Leonardo, 'the only bridge over the torrent is destroyed. Nothing but a bird could cross it now.'

'A bird!' exclaimed Emma, in a joyful

tone. 'I see how we can send a message to Falkenburg. Sir Theobald told me that I must keep my little dove shut up at first, or it would be sure to fly back. "However far it may be," he said, "it will find its way." If we were to fasten a letter to the dove, it would certainly take it to Falkenburg.'

'Thank God for the thought!' exclaimed the mother. 'Oh, Emma! surely some good angel must have put it in your heart.'

Emma hastened to fetch the dove, while her mother wrote the letter. She folded the sheet, and fastened it to a red collar with which Emma had adorned the bird. Emma, accompanied by her mother, and all the people of the castle, took the bird outside the castle and let it fly. It flew upwards towards the sky, hovered about for a few minutes, then suddenly directed its flight towards Falkenburg. A thousand good wishes and hearty prayers followed it; no treasure-laden ship ever set sail accompanied by more fervent desires of success.

In the meantime, Lady Rosalind and Emma were full of anxious care. 'If the bird should not reach the castle,' said the mother. 'If it should fall a prey to some larger bird; or if it should not be noticed and taken in at Falkenburg, how dreadful that would be!' They both placed themselves at the window and watched the whole night through, in the greatest anxiety, dreading to see the fiery sign which would show them that the bird had not reached their friends in time to save them. At last the day broke, and the cheerful light of the morning was doubly welcome after such a night of anxious suffering.

CHAPTER V.

Although Rosalind and Emma felt sure that the robbers had not succeeded in their wicked intention of burning the castle of Falkenburg, they were still in great suspense as to the fate of their friends; and that we may relieve our readers from the same anxiety, we will now tell all that happened at the castle on the previous evening.

The knight, Theobald, with his wife and daughter, had just sat down to their evening meal, when a servant came in and announced the two pilgrims. The knight ordered that they should be hospitably entertained, adding that after supper they should come up to the dining-hall and give an account of their pilgrimage.

While Agnes was looking forward to the pleasure of hearing an interesting story, suddenly she exclaimed, with astonishment, 'Oh look! there is my little dove,' as the bird appeared at the window, and pecked at the pane, as if asking to be let in. Agnes opened the window, and the dove flew in and settled upon her shoulder.

'Look!' said her mother, 'what a pretty red collar it has; and here is a piece of paper fastened to it; I do believe it is a letter. What curious fancies children have!'

The knight took the paper, and read the words, 'To be read immediately.' He opened the note, looked at it, and turned pale.

'What is this?' he exclaimed.

'What is the matter?' cried the mother and daughter, in alarm.

The knight then read aloud,—

'NOBLE SIR,

'The two pilgrims who will visit you this evening are robbers from the large band which you dispersed. The name of the elder is Lupo; of the younger, Orso. They wear armour, and carry daggers under their pilgrim's dress. This night they intend murdering you, with your wife and child, plundering and burning your castle, and, with the stolen treasures, passing themselves off in another country as rich lords. There are seven more ruffians lying in wait for an appointed signal (three lights in the pilgrims' room) to enter to your castle and help their companions, who will leave the garden door open to admit them. God grant that the dove may reach you safely, and in time to warn you. There was no other way of sending to you. Let me hear of your safety as soon as possible.

'Your grateful ROSALIND.'

'Oh! how wonderful,' exclaimed the mother, deeply moved, 'are the ways of

the Lord! The dove is a messenger of heaven, like Noah's dove, which brought the olive-branch into the ark. Oh, Agnes, let us thank God upon our knees for His great mercy.'

(*To be continued.*)

ONLY JUST ONCE.

THE little girl you see in the picture, with her hand upon the branch of a tree, I have been told is named Priscilla, but, as that name is rather long, she is always called Pet. She well deserves that name, because she is a sweet little girl, and is very much loved by her companions. Her birthday is in the summer, and she always has a party of young friends, and they have a picnic with her in the wood. They have all been playing at hide-and-seek, and she has been hiding behind that large tree for some time.

Just at her feet runs a brook, there are stepping-stones for persons to tread upon who wish to cross the water. Pet is just pondering in her mind whether she dare cross on the stepping-stones or not. If she can cross, then she can run quickly, and catch those who are looking for her before they get back to the goal. She had often been that way with her mother, but they never crossed on the stones, and she was told never to go that way unless her father took her. She thought of her mother's words, but said to herself, 'It would be such fun to catch them all, and no one will expect me to go that way—I will *only cross this once.*' As her companions were getting nearer and nearer, she did not give herself much time to think whether it was right or wrong. She gave one look into the brook, then sprang upon the first stone, then the second, and just as she was about to spring upon the third she heard a shout, 'There's Pet!'—and all the boys and girls ran back as fast as they could. Pet then tried to catch them by crossing quickly, and, in her hurry, missed the third stone and fell into the water. In the middle of the stream the water reached as high as her waist, and she fell backwards to the bottom, and was almost choked by the water pouring down her throat. However, she got up, but was so terribly frightened that she could hardly stand. Her hat was gone, her hair came down over her eyes so that she could not see; and I think she would fallen in again and have been carried away by the stream had not George Smith looked round. When he saw her fall he quickly ran back, jumped into the water and saved her. Her father was fishing not far down the stream, and was surprised to see her hat floating past him. He quite feared his child had been drowned, and ran back just as George was taking her out of the brook.

It was fortunate that her father was near, for poor Pet had sprained her ankle in her fall and could not walk home, so she had to be carried. The fun of the day was gone. Every one felt sorry for her, for she was a general favourite. But from that day forward she remembered that it is better to obey one's parents in all things than to *offend only just once*, and that ways that seem short and easy are sometimes both long and dangerous.

W. M.

RAIN-DROPS.

ANON.

CLOUDS are passing o'er the sky,
Weeping drops of welcome rain;
Sure the flowers shall not die,
But shall be revived again.

One short moment, and but one,
And the clouds have floated by;
And the bright beams of the sun
Sip the rain-drops to the sky.

Out of heaven, like the rain,
God has sent us, every one,
To refresh the hill or plain
Which we chance to fall upon.

Up to heaven may we return,
Like the little rain-drops, too,
Learning all we have to learn,
Doing all we have to do.

Only just Once.

David being Anointed by Samuel.'

Only just Once.

David being Anointed by Samuel.'

SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF DAVID.

DAVID BEING ANOINTED BY SAMUEL.

ONE day whilst David was with Jesse's flock, the good old prophet Samuel was sent by God to Bethlehem. To understand the purpose for which he was to go we must know what had happened in the land some years before.

Samuel on becoming the Judge of Israel had proved to be one of the best rulers that ever governed a nation. But in his old age the people had been alarmed at the danger of an invasion of the Amorites, and as Samuel's sons were, not like their good father, the elders of Israel had gone to the old prophet and judge, saying, '*Behold, thou art old and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.*'

Not only did they thus displease God and His prophet by choosing their own way instead of asking Him to raise them up a deliverer, but they even dared afterwards to say to Samuel, '*Nay, but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations.*' God punished them by granting their desire, and '*gave them a king in His wrath*' (Hosea, xiii. 11). Thus they lost their own high and special honour of having God alone for their King.

Samuel, at God's command, chose for the first king of Israel, Saul, a very tall, fine-looking young man, of the tribe of Benjamin, and the people at first rejoiced to have so brave and active a leader, but they soon began to suffer in various ways for their self-will and ingratitude. No blessing crowned Saul's deeds, because instead of obeying the Lord, he chose to judge for himself when he could see no harm in what he wished to do. After an act of disobedience that was *rebellion* and *stubbornness*, and was known to all Israel, Saul received from Samuel this dreadful message from God: '*Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king. The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine that is better than thou.*' The sad story may be read in the First Book of Samuel and the fifteenth chapter, which also tells us how Samuel mourned for the unhappy king, who had thus turned back from following God instead of obeying His commandments.

It was probably about sixteen years after this that God said to Samuel, '*How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill thine horn with oil, and go; I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided me a king among his sons.*' The Lord also gave him further commands as to what he must do, in order that if Saul should hear of the visit he might not guess its purpose. *And Samuel did that which the Lord spake*, though no doubt it was with a sad heart that he went. Bethlehem stood on a hill with terrace-like slopes leading up to it, and on these grew vines, and olives, and fig-trees. On the level ground at the foot of the terraces there were the corn-fields in which Boaz had first seen Ruth gleaning the ears of corn, and beyond these pleasant fields lay the desolate, treeless *wilderness of Judea*, which stretched far away towards the waters of the Dead Sea.

When the elders of Bethlehem saw Samuel approaching their town, driving a heifer before him for sacrifice, and carrying the horn of oil, they were afraid, though for what reason they were so we do not know, and they said, '*Comest thou peaceably?*' And Samuel said, '*Peaceably; I am come to sacrifice to the Lord.*' Then he invited these elders, and Jesse with his sons to the sacrifice and to the feast that was to form part of the ceremony.

When all were ready and waiting to begin the feast, Samuel looked earnestly at Jesse's eldest son, Eliab, who seemed the most likely to be intended for the future king, but the Lord who saw every secret of Eliab's heart said to the prophet, '*Look not on his countenance or on the height of his stature; because I have re-*

fused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.'

Then Jesse caused each of his other sons to pass before Samuel, who after seeing all the seven said, '*The Lord hath not chosen these. Are here all thy children?*' And Jesse answered, '*There remaineth yet the youngest, and behold he keepeth the sheep.*' And Samuel said to Jesse, '*Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down until he come hither.*'

It must have seemed strange to these chief men of Bethlehem and to David's family, that God's own chosen prophet, the *holiest* man in the land, and, except Saul, the *greatest* man in the land, should keep the feast waiting for a young shepherd lad. Even Jesse had not thought it worth while to send for David, who was probably at some distance from home, but *the Lord seeth not as man seeth*, and He was about to choose a king after His own heart, one whom neither Samuel nor Jesse, nor perhaps any man in Israel, would have thought fit for so great an honour. At length David came, and while he stood before the prophet, who saw that he was *ruddy* and of a *beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to*, the Lord's voice said to Samuel, '*Arise, anoint him, for this is he.*' Then the prophet poured over David's head the oil that was in the horn, and *the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward*, and gave him power to do great deeds which he could not have done without the Holy Spirit's aid. The reason why he was anointed does not seem to have been understood by those who saw what Samuel did. We know that the ceremony did not actually *make* David a king, for Saul reigned about seven years longer, but it *marked him out* as having been chosen by God to become the king at some future time. After the feast David went back to his flock, and Samuel returned home to Ramah.

Most likely the oil which Samuel poured over David's head was some of that *holy anointing oil* that was kept in the Tabernacle for sacred purposes only (Exodus, xxx. 23–33), and was a type of the Holy Spirit. In being anointed David was a type of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom we sing,—

'Hail to the Lord's Anointed,
Great David's greater Son!'

It was not with holy oil that our Lord was anointed, but with the Holy Ghost, *the oil of gladness.* (Heb. i. 9.)

Many lessons are taught us by what the Bible tells about David's being anointed, but we will take the lesson that should be learnt from the words, *The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh upon the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh upon the heart.* What a warning this verse is for those who are tempted to feel vain of anything that makes them admired by their friends, whether, for instance, it be beauty, or cleverness, or skill! Whilst boys or girls are conceited about having these good gifts from God, the Lord when He *looketh upon the heart* may see them, not *as man seeth*, but as having hearts full of evil thoughts and unrepented sins. When, therefore, we find ourselves admired for what we *are*, or for what we *do*, would it not be well to say to ourselves, *But the Lord looketh upon the heart?*

And then what a comfort these same words are for all who are humbly and earnestly trying to give their hearts to God, and who pray to have them washed and made *whiter than snow* in *the blood of Jesus Christ His Son*, which *cleanseth us from all sin.* Whether admired and noticed by their companions, or whether passed by as being plain in looks, or dull at learning, or weak and sickly, or very lowly in station, these happy children have the joy of knowing that *the Lord looketh upon the heart*, and that His loving approval is a blessing better than life itself.

THE TWO PURSES.

GEORGE, the son of a poor woodman, was one day sitting crying under a tree in the middle of a forest. A nobleman in a simple green dress, with a star embroidered on his breast, heard the cries of the little boy, and went up to him and said, 'What are you crying for, my poor boy?'

'Alas!' said George, 'my mother has

been very ill for some time, and this morning my father sent me to the town to pay the doctor, and I have lost the purse with the money in it.'

The nobleman turned and spoke in a low tone to a gamekeeper who accompanied him and who pulled out of his pocket a little purse made of dark crimson silk in

Old Tom the Cat.

which were several gold pieces. 'Is this the purse which you have lost?' said the nobleman.

'Oh, no,' replied George, 'mine was not so beautiful as that, and it had no gold pieces in it.'

'Perhaps this is it, then,' said the gamekeeper, taking out of his pocket a little shabby purse.

'Oh, yes, that is it,' said George, joyfully.

The gamekeeper then gave it to him, and the nobleman said, 'Take this purse, too, besides your own, as a reward for your honesty and trust in God.'

Another boy, of the same age as George, named Stephen, who lived in the neighbouring village, heard about George's adventure, and one day, knowing that the

same nobleman was hunting in the forest, he sat down at the foot of a tree and began crying, 'Oh my purse, I have lost my purse and money!'

Hearing these cries the nobleman again stopped as he was passing, and, after having asked him several questions, he showed him a purse full of gold pieces, and said, 'Is this the one which you have lost?'

'Oh, yes, that is it,' said Stephen, stretching out his hands to take it.

But the gamekeeper came up and said, 'You wicked boy, how dare you put yourself in my lord's way in order to try and impose upon his kindness in that manner; but I am going to pay you in your own coin.' So saying, he cut a stick from a tree, and gave the boy the caning which he richly deserved.—*Translated from the French.* E. W.

OLD TOM, THE CAT.

OLD Tom belonged to my aunt Deborah, and was in my opinion, and especially in that of his mistress, a very respectable right-minded cat; but like some human beings who get characters which they do not deserve, Tom was accused of always being where he should not be.

It arose from a circumstance which I am about to describe. One cold evening in winter, Polly, one of the maid-servants, had gone up to a large garret in which the dirty linen bags were kept for the washing-day. She had to look into one of them for a garment which had been put there before being duly mended. Her candle was a dip; it burned dim. She did not much like going up there at all. She drew open the mouth of the bag, when she afterwards declared—that—out there jumped a monster as big as a bull, and rushed headlong downstairs. A fearful shriek was heard, and when the rest of the household hurried up as fast as the old butler Burnaby, who going first armed with a poker, would allow them, they found Polly stretched senseless on the ground. Burnaby's candle or his voice called her to her senses; but all she would do was to cry out, 'Oh, the bull! the bull! the bull! Where has he gone?' As the hall-doors were all locked, and as no bull was ever known to have jumped through a key-hole, and the only four-legged criminal found in the house was old Tom, and as cats are known now and then to get into dirty clothes-bags, there could be no doubt that it was he and not a bull who had frightened Polly.

Some time after this Aunt Deborah had a dinner-party. There were a number of guests—a fair young bride and a happy bridegroom among them. Aunt Deborah took one end of the table and Uncle Josiah the other. Scarcely were they seated when the young bride began to look very uncomfortable.

'What is the matter, my dear madam,' asked Uncle Josiah, gently.

'Oh, nothing, thank you. I am very well. Only the cat!' said the bride.

'Only the cat!' repeated my uncle. 'What can you mean?'

'Oh, nothing—nothing,' again said the young lady, growing pale and red by turns, and showing that there was something or other which annoyed her excessively.

Of course the young husband when he saw his wife's agitation became alarmed. He also asked the natural question, 'What is the matter, dearest?' and received for an answer, 'Nothing—only the cat.'

'Have you seen a cat in the room, my dear?' he asked.

'Oh, no, no, but I feel it is here—I know it is here—indeed it is,' exclaimed the young lady in a tone of alarm.

This of course made the guests look under the table, and the servants hunt behind the curtains and the side-board, and in every other possible hiding-place; but no cat could be seen. Some of the guests, I believe, thought that the young lady was out of her wits, or at all events very fanciful. The husband, however, explained briefly that his young wife had from her infancy a natural repugnance to cats, and that she shuddered even if one came near her. Still, as no cat was to be

found, he supposed that she must have been affected by some other cause. She still insisted that a cat, and nothing but a cat, was in the room, and at last she fell almost fainting into her husband's arms. Great was the confusion of the guests, when at that instant Thomas the footman, happening to observe that one of the shutters was not quite closed, opened it, when out leaped Old Tom, and dashed past the bride out of the room. The bride heaved a deep sigh, and declared herself perfectly well able to return to the table.

Old Tom was, however, once, not only not where he should not have been, but he rendered a great service to the family.

One night after going to rest, Aunt Deborah was aroused by hearing Old Tom mewing at the door. 'There's Tom as usual where he should not be,' said Aunt Deborah to herself; for Tom ought to have been asleep in his basket in the housekeeper's room. Still Tom went on 'Mew, mew, mew,' till my aunt losing patience, got up as rapidly as her rheumatism would allow her, and opened the door, intending to order Tom back to his bed. No sooner did Tom see her than he bounded towards her, mewing strangely and circling round and round her legs. Thinking that Tom wished to remain she closed the door, supposing that having gained his object he would be quiet. Instead of that he continued to mew louder than ever, and moving round my aunt and then to the door, as if to persuade her to open it. This at last she did, supposing even then that old Tom only wished to be let out again. However, when she stood in the room with the door open and still did not move, Tom instead of going away came back mewing as before and circling round her. At length it struck the old lady that the cat must have some motive in thus arousing her at that untimely hour, and putting on her thick flannel petticoat and dressing-gown with a becoming shawl over her head, she prepared to follow Tom. As she got outside the room she heard a peculiar noise. She stopped to listen. She had no doubt about it—some persons were attempting to force an entrance. 'Burglars,' she said to herself. The very idea of what might happen sent a thrill through her; but she was a courageous old lady, and screwing up her nerves she hastened to Uncle Josiah's room. He was quickly aroused, and loading his pistols he went down to Burnaby's room, followed by my aunt with Tom by her side now purring with evident satisfaction.

Burnaby, who with due discretion instantly set the alarm bells ringing, aroused Thomas, and what with the screaming of the women upstairs, the shouting of the men down below, and the ringing of the bells all over the house, the burglars were so frightened that they took to their heels leaving all the implements of their trade behind them. Had it not been for the sagacity of Old Tom, they would very soon have been inside the house.

As the geese whose loud quacks saved the Capital of Rome have been honoured in the pages of history, so does Old Tom deserve to have his acts recorded by a member of the family to whom he rendered so great a service.

'BEAR YE ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS.

BEAR ye one another's burdens,
Whoever hears that word,
Hath a commandment spoken straight
Unto him by the Lord.

And something that is helpful
We each of us can do;
Not only men and women,
But every one of you.

Free footsteps for the weary—
Low voices for the sick—
And in the little rubs of life,
A kindly thought and quick.

Devices for the fractious child—
Patience with those that tease;
Oh! dearest children, do not say
'What little things are these!'

Begin with little labours
Fit for your little strength,
So grow in grace, until ye hear
Your Lord's 'Well done' at length.

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'And something that is helpful we each of us must do.'

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. IV.] APRIL, 1869. [One Penny.

A Brave Boy.

A BRAVE BOY.

I WAS sitting by a window in the second storey of one of the large boarding houses at Saratoga Springs, thinking of absent friends, when I heard shouts of children from the piazza beneath me.

'Oh yes, that's capital! so we will! Come on, now! There's William Hale! Come on, William, we're going to have a ride on the railway. Come with us.'

'Yes, if my mother is willing. I will run and ask her,' replied William.

'Oh, oh! so you must run and ask your ma. Great baby—run along and ask your ma! Ain't you ashamed? I didn't ask my mother.'

'Nor I—nor I,' added half a dozen voices.

'Be a man, William,' cried the first voice, 'Come along with us, if you don't wish to be called a coward so long as you live. Don't you see we are all waiting?'

I leaned forward to catch a view of the children, and saw William standing with one foot advanced, and his hand firmly clenched, in the midst of the group. He was a fine subject for a painter, just at that moment. His flushed brow, flashing eye, compressed lip, and changing cheek, all told how that word *coward* was rankling in his breast. Will he prove himself indeed one, by yielding to them! thought I. It was with breathless interest I listened for his answer, for I feared that the evil principle in his heart would be stronger than the good. But no.

'I will not go without asking my mother,' said the noble boy, his voice trembling with emotion, 'and I am no coward either. I promised her I would not go from the house without her leave, and I should be a base coward if I were to tell her a wicked lie.'

There was something commanding in his tone, which made the noisy children mute. It was the power of a strong soul over the weaker, and they could not help yielding him the tribute of respect.

I saw him in the evening among the gathered multitude in the parlour. He was walking by his mother's side—a stately matron, clad in widow's weeds. It was with evident pride she looked on her graceful boy, whose face was one of the finest I ever saw, fairly radiant with animation and intelligence. Well might she be happy in such a son—one who could *dare to do right*, when all were tempting him to do wrong.

THE LITTLE DOVE.

(*Concluded from p.* 39.)

THE knight then placed his wife and daughter in safety, and quickly arming himself, ordered two of his bravest people to attend him. He then sent to invite the pilgrims upstairs. They entered the room with a very humble air, and Lupo addressed the knight with the greatest politeness. 'Noble sir,' he said, 'we have come from Hopenburg, and bring you a thousand kind messages. Oh, how happy we esteem ourselves to see face to face a man whose heroic fame has filled the world; the protector of the widow and orphan, whom the Lady Rosalind can never sufficiently praise. She and her charming daughter, Emma, overwhelmed us with undeserved favours. We have much to tell you about them, but first that the mother and daughter, as well as the beautiful little dove, are in the enjoyment of excellent health.'

The knight felt greatly enraged at their hypocrisy, but he restrained himself, and asked, quietly, 'Who are you?'

'Poor pilgrims,' answered they. 'We come from the Holy Land, and are going to our home in Thuringia.'

'How are you called?' asked the knight.

'My name is Hermann,' said Lupo, 'and my young cousin is called Conrad.'

'What do you want here?' continued the knight.

'Nothing but a night's lodging,' said they. 'We will set out again early to-morrow morning.'

'You speak falsely!' cried the knight, with a thundering voice, drawing his sword from its sheath. 'Your names are *not* Hermann and Conrad; you, villain, are called Lupo, and you, Orso. You have *not* come from the Holy Land; you are no pilgrims, but robbers and murderers. You are *not* going to Thuringia. You have *not* come here for a night's lodging, but to rob, to murder, and to burn. But you shall receive the due reward of your crimes. Seize them, and strip off their deceitful dress, that they may appear in their true colours! Disarm them, put them in chains, and throw them into the dungeon!'

The servants seized them, tore off their pilgrim's dress, and exposed the armour underneath.

'You abominable hypocrites!' exclaimed the knight, 'to deceive under the appearance of piety. Such a crime alone deserves death.' They were then chained, and thrown into a dungeon.

As soon as they were alone the younger robber exclaimed, 'How is it that the knight knows everything so exactly? Is it possible that the boy who showed us the way can have understood what we said, and betrayed us?'

'Then he must have flown in through the window,' said the other. 'I never took my eyes off the door, and am quite certain that nobody has come in. The knight must surely have some dealings with the evil one.' He then fell into a violent passion, uttering imprecations upon the knight as the cause of his misfortunes, while Orso, in his turn, reproached his companion for having tempted him to so great a sin.

In the meantime the people of the castle, by the command of their master, placed three burning tapers in the lower window. The porter—upon whose prudence the knight could depend—then went with seven trusty servants into the court-yard, and watched for the robbers. For a long time they waited in vain—until the moon rose—and the servants began to fear that they would not be able to conceal themselves any longer.

'I have thought of a plan,' suddenly said the porter. He went away, and returned in a few minutes in a pilgrim's dress, and a hat with cockle-shells. 'Now,' he said, 'they will not recognise me. You place yourselves behind the pillars of the wall, so that you may not be seen.'

After they had waited for some little time longer, a low knock was heard at the door. The porter opened it, and when the robber saw him standing there in the pilgrim's dress, he said in a low voice, 'Is it all right?'

'Quite right,' said the porter, in the same tone; 'be still, and all of you come in.'

They all came in as quietly as possible, carrying torches and swords. As soon as they were all in, the porter locked the door behind them, and exclaimed, 'Now is the time!' Suddenly the servants rushed out, and fell upon the robbers; at the same moment the castle door opened, and the knight appeared in full armour, accompanied by several men carrying lighted torches. In a few minutes the robbers—who had not even time to draw their swords—were overpowered, bound with chains, and thrown into dungeons, there to await the reward of their misdeeds.

'Such,' said the knight, 'is the end of the evil doer. He has dug a pit for his neighbour, and is fallen into the midst of it himself.'

CHAPTER VI.

In the meantime Lady Rosalind and Emma were anxiously expecting a messenger from Falkenburg. As the day passed away, and no one appeared, they began to be seriously alarmed, until at last, towards evening, as Emma was looking out of a window in the tower, she saw a carriage, accompanied by several men on horseback, coming out of the wood. Emma hastened down, and called to her mother. 'They are coming themselves, I am sure they are.' The mother and daughter then went to meet the carriage.

The knight, Theobald, with his wife and daughter, had set out early in the day to

announce their safety to their friends, and thank them in person. As soon as the knight saw Rosalind and Emma he sprang from his horse, while the Lady Ottilia and Agnes got out of the carriage, and greeted their friends most affectionately, and all the way back to the castle poured forth their acknowledgments to them for the kind and clever manner in which they had contrived to let them know of their danger.

A feast was prepared to celebrate this happy meeting, and the friends could talk

of nothing but the late events. Leonardo, who waited at table, was closely questioned upon all that had passed between the two robbers; and, after telling his story, he begged that some mercy might be shown to the younger, who had prevented the other from throwing him over the precipice.

When the meal was over the knight said, 'We will all wish health and happiness to Emma, for we owe it to her happy thought that we are not now buried under the ruins of Falkenburg.'

'Oh, no,' said Emma, modestly, 'it was Agnes's kindness in giving me the bird.'

'We have all reason,' said Rosalind, 'to be thankful to God for our children's conduct: but this poor orphan boy, Leonardo, has beyond all comparison done more than either.'

'Certainly,' said the knight, 'you are quite right;' and turned to the boy and said, 'Leonardo, you must be my esquire, for your conduct has given you a claim upon me, and your *heart* is noble if your birth and station are not.'

'It seems to me,' said Ottilia, 'that we owe much to the memory of Adalrich, Rosalind's late husband, for was it not his compassion which gave the boy a home in the castle?'

'That is quite true,' said Rosalind, 'but I do not forget how much I and my daughter owe to Sir Theobald; and surely God, the rewarder of all good, has requited to him his kindness to me and my child.'

'Yes,' added the knight, 'in this, as in all else, to Him our first thanks are due; He has shown great mercy to us, and worked wonders by means of an innocent dove; to Him be all praise. But we must not forget what we owe to our fellow-men; and, as an acknowledgment for the services which Emma has rendered us, I will beg of the Emperor that she may be allowed to use a white dove with an olive-branch as a crest.'

'That is a very good thought,' said Ottilia, 'and in the meantime I think we can even now give Emma a little pleasure.'

She made a sign to his daughter, who left the room, and in a few minutes the dove flew in; Agnes had brought it with her unknown to her friend. The dove flew directly to Emma, and settled upon her outstretched hand, when Emma perceived with surprise that it carried in its beak a golden olive-branch. 'Accept this beautiful emblem of danger and of safety, dear Emma,' said Ottilia, 'as a token of our gratitude.' It was given to me as a wedding present by my dear mother, during a time of war and trouble, and the words which she used at the time are as well suited to our present circumstances: "Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."'

AFRAID OF THE DARK.

NOW, Miss Nellie, it's time for you to go to bed; put away your doll.'

Nellie was a little girl of five years old, with blue eyes and brown hair.

'Oh, nurse,' said she, 'must I go *just* yet? let me wait five minutes, dear Nana,' she added, in a coaxing voice.

'No, no, I'm in a hurry to-night with my ironing, and it's time little girls were in bed,' said Nurse; 'run and fetch some curl-papers from the next room.'

But little Nellie was afraid to go in the dark, and it was some time before she ventured to enter the night-nursery. Nurse was wondering why she was so long away, when she suddenly heard her little charge give a sharp cry; she quickly laid down her iron, and ran to see what was the matter. Nellie was standing in the middle of the room, pointing towards a dark corner; 'Oh, nurse, nurse,' she sobbed, 'there's something in that corner; I saw it move.'

'Dear, dear! how you frightened me, child! it's the shadows of the trees in the moonlight that have startled you.'

However, the little girl would not be comforted, and continued crying so loudly, that her mother came up-stairs.

'Why, what is the matter with my little girl?' said she, opening the door.

Nurse explained what had taken place, and Nellie's mother, sitting down on a chair, lifted her child, still crying, on her knee.

'So my poor little girl is afraid of the dark, is she?' she said, in a kind, gentle voice; 'That's very bad; I wonder what we can do to make her brave; what do you think, nurse?'

'Oh, mamma, boys are always brave; could I be a boy?'

Nurse laughed, and so did mamma, and then she told Nellie, that little boys and girls must just be what God made them; 'But still,' she added, 'there are many little girls who are very brave; shall I tell you why I think they are? I think it is because they pray to the dear Lord Jesus, and ask Him to take care of them.'

'And I suppose that Jesus can take care of us because He can see in the dark?' asked Nellie.

'Yes, my child,' said her mother; 'God can see every thing and every one, and if we ask Him to take care of us, He will do so; another time you must pray when you are afraid, and you may be quite sure that Jesus will hear you. You must try and be brave, my child; even some people who are grown up are afraid of the dark, but there is really nothing to make us fear. Now I will teach you a verse of a little hymn, which you can say when you are afraid:—

"Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me,
Bless Thy little lamb to-night;
Through the darkness, be Thou near me,
Keep me safe till morning light."

Nellie soon learnt this little verse, and then she again went into the dark room to fetch her curl-papers; but she did not go alone, her mother went with her, and held her hand.

As months went by, little Nellie learnt to be brave, and to run about the house after dusk as freely as in the daytime. But she did not do it all at once; it took a long time to learn, but she remembered what her mother had taught her, and she prayed to God to take care of her. And thus little Nellie grew up to be a good and brave woman, and one that trusted in God with all her heart.

COMING SPRING.

By Mary Howitt.

IN all the years which have been,
The spring hath green'd the bough—
The gladsome, hopeful spring-time!
Keep heart! It comes e'en now.

The winter time departeth;
The early flowers expand;
The blackbird and the turtle-dove
Are heard throughout the land.

The sadness of the winter,
Which gloomed our hearts, is gone;
A thousand signs betoken
That spring-time comes anon.

'Tis spring-time in our bosoms;
All strife aside we cast;
The storms were for the winter days,
But they are gone and past.

Before us lies the spring-time—
Thank God, the time of mirth—
When birds are singing in the trees,
And flowers gem all the earth;

When a thousand busy hands upturn
The bounteous, fruitful mould,
And the heart of every poet feels
More love than it can hold.

In all the years which have been,
The spring-time green'd the bough—
The gentle, gracious spring-time!
Rejoice! it comes e'en now.

SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF DAVID.

SAUL RECEIVING DAVID WITH JESSE'S PRESENT.

THOUGH Saul still reigned over the kingdom, he knew that, sooner or later, Samuel's words must come true, and it would be taken from him. If he had but spent these years in turning from his evil ways, and seeking with all his heart for God's forgiveness, he could have had the comfort of knowing that though he must

suffer the loss of his kingdom in this world he would not also lose his own soul in the world to come.

Instead of this, he continued year after year to resist the Holy Spirit by his stubborn refusal to listen to the voice within that urged him to repent. But GOD has said, '*My Spirit shall not always strive with man*' (Gen. vi. 3.), and so at length the unhappy Saul was entirely forsaken by the Holy Spirit. We are told that '*the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul*,' and, as no heart can long remain empty, '*an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.*' (1 Sam. xvi. 14.) By this we understand that God permitted Satan to gain possession of Saul's heart and to fill it with evil tempers and angry passions. The miserable king had fits of gloomy fear and jealous suspicion, and dreadful melancholy, and sudden despair, and when these fits were on him he was as one mad.

His servants were grieved to see his misery, and as they knew that music often has a wonderful power to soothe a troubled mind, they entreated him to let them seek for some clever musician to come and play when the evil spirit was upon him. As soon as Saul had given his consent, one of the servants said, '*Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite, that is cunning* (skilful) *in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the Lord is with him.*' On hearing this, Saul ordered some messengers to go to Jesse, and say, '*Send me David, thy son, which is with the sheep.*' No doubt the men, when they arrived at the house of Jesse, told him why David was wanted, and he at once prepared to send him. As it was the custom that no one except his own servants might enter the king's presence without taking him a gift, Jesse loaded an ass with bread and a skin-bottle of wine, and this with a live kid he sent by David as his present to Saul.

As the distance from Bethlehem was not more than ten miles, David arrived the same day at Gibeah, where Saul lived. He was at once taken into the king's presence, and when he stood before Saul, offering his father's gifts, so beautiful was his countenance and so winning was his manner that Saul *loved him greatly* and wished to keep him always with him. He therefore sent Jesse this friendly message, '*Let David, I pray thee, stand before me: for he hath found favour in my sight;*' and some time after he made David his armour-bearer. In this way David learned at Saul's court wisdom and experience, which proved most useful to him when he became the ruler of the land. So true is it that, as he tells us himself, '*The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord.*' Psalm xxxvii. 23.

From these cheering words of David, we must turn to the warning set before us in the fact that *the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul.* Although our most merciful GOD bears patiently with wilful sin for a long while, yet He will not bear with it always. If we give ourselves up, as did Saul, to follow 'the devices and desires of our own hearts,' we *grieve the Holy Spirit of God* (Eph. iv. 30), we quench the bright beams of His light in our hearts (1 Thess. v. 19), and we provoke Him to depart altogether from our hearts. And if we have not the Holy Spirit's presence with us and in us, we can have no faith—no love for GOD the Father nor for the Lord Jesus—no power to withstand temptation—no true comfort in our trials and sorrows—no peace of mind now, and no hope of heaven hereafter.

'Take not Thy Holy Spirit from us.' We have all very often used this short prayer in the morning and evening service of the Church, but have you ever thought how much they mean for you and for all with whom you join in saying them? Will you not try to say them always from your very heart? And having done so, will you not try every day to remember that as often as you do what you *know* to be wrong, you are resisting God's Spirit, just as surely as by trying to do right you are yielding to His holy and blessed guidance?

Saul receiving David.

SPRING.

SPRING.

THE ice and snow are melted;
The running brooks are seen;
And over the brown meadows
The grass is growing green.

The leaves are on the trees again,
The birds come back and sing;
The flowers soon will be in bloom,
How beautiful is Spring!

Oh, God, how sweet and lovely
Thou makest all I see!
How shall I thank Thee fitly
For all Thy gifts to me!

EMILY BARNES.

CHAPTER I.

IT was washing-day in the little village of Lakewater, and Emily Barnes, a child of about eleven years of age, was standing at a large tub, washing very busily. Emily was the eldest of five children. Her mother had been left a widow about a year before our story begins, and since that time she had had a hard struggle to find food and clothing for herself and her children. She had a small allowance weekly from the parish for the three younger ones, and her eldest boy, John, who was only nine years old, worked at a mine about three miles off, where he earned half-a-crown a-week. Mrs. Barnes, who was a sickly woman, was obliged to keep Emily at home to help her in her work; otherwise she, too, might have been earning something.

Emily was a thoughtful child; and now, as she stood at her tub, she was thinking of what Miss Minnie Ashton, the clergyman's daughter, had said to them the day before at the Sunday-school. 'Wherever you are,' she had said, 'whether you are at school, or helping your mother at home, you can always find something to do for God, if you try.'

'I wonder,' thought Emily to herself, 'if I could do anything for God to-day.'

Just then she caught sight of her little brother, who was playing with a large knife, and in danger of cutting his fingers off. She was going to give him a slap, and tell him to 'drop it,' when the thought struck her that perhaps this was one of the ways which Miss Minnie had meant of doing something for God. So Emily shook the soapy water from her hands, and, going up to him gently, said, 'Tommy dear, you must give me that knife; you know mother does not like you to play with it, because you will hurt yourself. Here's your little cart,' she added, 'you can play with that instead.'

The little fellow quietly gave up the knife, and ran off to play with his cart, and Emily turned to her washing again. 'I think Miss Minnie would say that was something for God,' she said to herself; 'I did feel so cross with Tommy for a minute.'

She had nearly finished her work, when Mr. Ashton, the clergyman, knocked at the door, and stepped in.

'Well, Emily,' he said, as she wiped her hands and put a chair for him, 'you seem to be very busy. I heard your mother was poorly, and called in to see her. How is she?'

'Please, sir, mother's very bad; she had one of her fainting fits last night, and she fell down and hurt herself very much. I ran in directly to call grandmother, but we couldn't get her round for a long time. P'raps you'd like to speak to granny, sir,' she added; 'I'll just run in and call her, if you please.'

In a minute Emily appeared again, with her grandmother, Mrs. Carter, who lived two doors off.

'Good afternoon, sir,' said the old woman, dropping a curtsey to Mr. Ashton; 'the child says you've called in to ask after Susan.'

'Yes, Mrs. Carter,' replied Mr. Ashton. 'I'm sorry to find that she has had one of her old attacks again. Have you had the doctor to see her?'

'Yes, sir; Mr. Heal was here this morning, and he says it's a mercy she wasn't killed; she fell right against the corner of that there table, and when I came in she looked, sure enough, like one dead. It was

a good hour, sir, before we could get her upstairs to bed. Mr. Heal said it was all from weakness, and that she ought to have plenty of strengthening things; so I made so bold as to ask him to write an order for some wine for her, which Emily is going to take up to the Squire's this evening.'

'That's all right, Mrs. Carter, and she shall have a pudding from the Parsonage to-morrow, if you think she would like it.'

'Thank you kindly, sir; I daresay a bit of pudding might tempt her, but she 've scarcely put anything inside her lips to-day. She's dozing now, sir, or else I'm sure she would be very glad to see you.'

'Very well, I'll call in another day, Mrs. Carter, and I hope I shall find her better then. Good day to you. Good-bye, Emily, and be a good girl.'

CHAPTER II.

Two days after Mr. Ashton's visit, Susan Barnes was well enough to come downstairs in the afternoon. Emily tidied the cottage, and got the most comfortable chair ready, and put the tea-things on the table, thinking that a cup of tea would refresh her mother after the fatigue of dressing. Then, putting on her hat, and taking a jug in her hand, she ran out to get some milk, leaving granny to see her mother safe downstairs.

As she ran along she met several of her schoolfellows just coming out of school. They stopped her, and cried out,—

'Oh, Emily, do you know the tea-drinking is to be the day after to-morrow! Miss Minnie has just been to the school to tell us of it.'

'Oh, is it?' said Emily; 'I thought it wasn't to be till next week.'

'No more it was; but Miss Minnie is going away next week, and now she says it is to be on Friday. You'll be there, won't you, Emily!'

'Oh, yes, if I can,' she said; 'but I mustn't stay talking any longer, or mother will be waiting for her tea.'

So she hurried off, her head full of the tea-drinking and the merry games they would have. But presently she remembered that if she went there would be no one left at home to take care of the little ones, as her mother would not be well enough to attend to them, and the doctor had said that any extra fatigue or bustle might bring on one of her attacks again.

'And I know granny has as much as she can do as it is,' she said to herself. 'No, I don't think I'll go, and I won't say anything about it at home, and then mother won't fret, as I know she would if she thought she was keeping me at home.'

And then Miss Minnie's words came into her mind; 'And I remember she said, too, that we ought to be glad to give up any little thing to please Him, when He gave up *so much* for us.'

So, by the time she reached home, she had quite made up her mind not to say anything about the tea-drinking, and there was a bright smile on her face to welcome her mother when she opened the door.

'Well, mother, how are you feeling now? I ran out to get some milk for your tea, and I'm afraid you've been waiting for it.'

'No, my child, I haven't been waiting; it was very thoughtful of you to get it all ready, and now I feel as if a cup of tea would refresh me nicely.'

'Yes, mother, I'll make it at once; but where's granny gone?'

'She's gone home, dear; I wouldn't let her stay any longer, when she had helped me downstairs, as I knew she was in a hurry to get home to grandfather.'

When they had finished tea, Emily put the younger children to bed; and then, taking the large Bible down from the shelf, she came and sat down on a stool at her mother's feet. Emily always read a chapter to her mother in the evenings, and now she asked what she should read.

'Read the fourteenth of St. John, dear.'

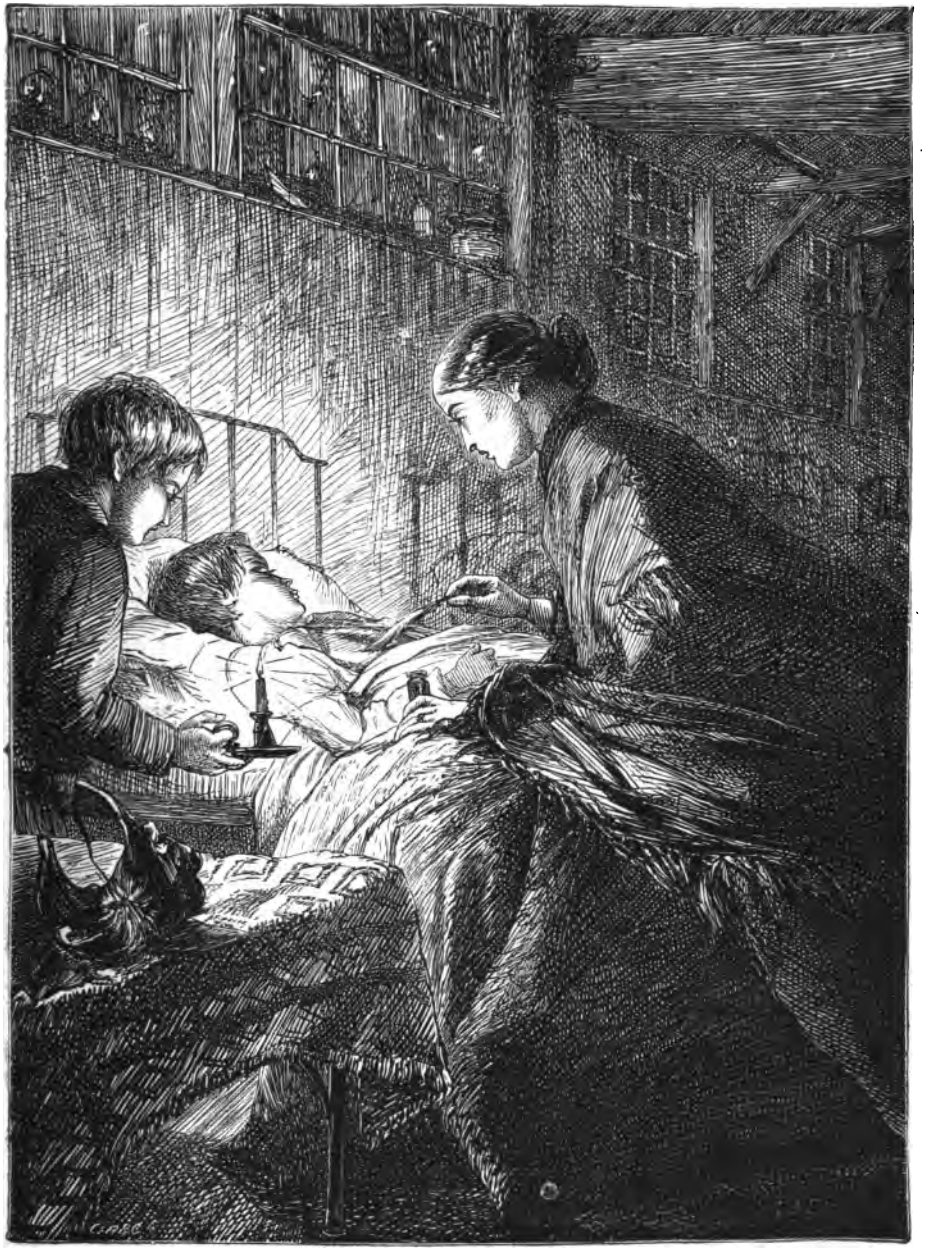
When she had finished reading, neither of them spoke for some time.

'That's a beautiful chapter,' Mrs. Barnes said at length; 'it always seems to give one such peace, when one's been fretting and worrying all day.'

'I wonder, mother, if Jesus is preparing a place for you and me?' said Emily, thoughtfully.

'I trust so, my child; He prepares a place for all who love Him—for all His faithful servants; though He knows,' she added, reverently, 'what a poor service

mine is, and how cold my love to Him is. I was thinking only just now, how easily our thoughts are called away from Him by the smallest trifles. It seems strange that a soul which has been born again of God should cling so to earthly things. Your dear father used to say to me sometimes, when he was ill, "I see so much that's evil in my heart, that I'm afraid I shall 'come short' after all." But he had grace given him according to his need, and was able to say at last, "Thanks be to



The Sick Boy.

God, which giveth *me* the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."'

'Do you know, mother, it makes me tremble sometimes to think, what if I shouldn't get to heaven after all? I do think I want to love God and serve Him now; but then a lifetime seems so long, and I'm afraid Satan may tempt me away from Him. Just think, mother, you know I may live sixty years longer; sixty years! I don't think I could keep good all that time, do you think I could?'

'Ah, dear, we have all need enough to be afraid of falling away; and the Bible says that Satan is always "walking about, seeking whom he may devour;" but, then, thank God, we have Something and Somebody to put against that; He says, "My grace is sufficient for thee," and we know that He who has begun the good work will finish it. Yes—

'"While all things change, He changes not,
He ne'er forgets, though oft forgot."

But, for all that, we need to be very watchful, and to keep our hearts with all diligence.

'And now we mustn't sit up talking any longer; it's time we were both in bed.'

(To be continued.)

THE SICK BOY.

MANY who read this little story will doubtless know something of London. Others will have heard the story of Whittington and his cat, of the boy who expected London streets were paved with gold. But the little boy whom you see lying upon the bed lived in London all his life, yet he saw no gold. The street in which he lived was dark and gloomy, and nothing but wretchedness, dirt, and misery, ever came before his eyes. He never saw a green field, and the only flowers he ever touched were poor weak miserable ones that grew in pots, and never had fresh earth to make the roots grow, nor had the thick dust washed off their leaves to make them healthy. William Lade had a kind mother, but she was never very well, and his father got but little money to get food and clothing. Some days the poor child had nothing to eat but dry bread, and nothing to drink but dirty-looking water such as you and I would not drink.

Poor Willie could neither read nor write; he knew but little of the world around him, for he could not walk, and no one came and carried him or gave him a drive.

I think I hear some kind boy or girl say, 'I wish he might have some of my nice dinner. I would give him half my meat and half my pudding.' I will tell you why the poor boy could not walk. One day when he was quite a baby, his mother was carrying him across the room when she stumbled over a hole in the floor and dropped him. His back was so injured by the fall, that he could never walk or even sit up.

When he was about nine years old his mother died, and he was left alone almost all day. Sometimes a neighbour would come in and stay a short time, and give him something to eat. But no one was half so kind as Henry Venner; he would never miss a day, and always called to see poor Willie after school hours. Sometimes he would read to him, sometimes tell him stories out of the Bible he heard at school; and if at any time he got an orange or anything nice, he would either give it all or share it with the poor little cripple.

One night, it was the dreariest and gloomiest Willie ever passed, his father did not come home, and the next day Henry found his little companion very ill. He talked very wildly and seemed not quite to know where he was. Next morning it was found that Willie's father had been run over by a heavy cart and killed, and before the next day the poor little orphan boy was taken to the hospital. Here, under kind treatment and good food, he recovered his senses. He was very sad when he heard of his father's death, and wished that he might die too. But he lived several weeks in the hospital. A very kind and gentle lady came

to read to him, and talk to him, and Henry Venner often went to see his friend. In the hospital Willie learnt much about Jesus Christ and His sufferings for us, and became content to bear his own pains in remembrance of the sufferings of our dear Saviour. At last, one Sunday evening as this kind lady was painting his chest with a feather, dipped in the bottle you see, in order to strengthen him, he looked up in her face, smiled a sweet smile, and died. Henry, who was holding the light, wept bitterly when he knew his friend was dead. But all who knew the poor little cripple's history, felt glad he had been released from a world of trial so that he might go and live with our dear Saviour above. W. M.

THE POWER OF LITTLE WORDS.

'COME on Sunday,' said an elderly gentleman to a little boy, 'come on Sunday, for I am at home all day, and want to see you.'

'Why! do you stay at home all day on Sunday?' said the little fellow.

'Yes,' said the old man; 'don't you?'

'No, I go to church twice, and so does papa. It is wicked not to go to church if you are well.'

It was only a little word, only a little voice that uttered it; but it went home to that man so old in sin, and it told him how wrong he was, and what a great sinner he was. Sunday came, and his wife and children were astonished to hear him say he was going to church. Ever afterwards he was seen in his proper place, thus showing how great good God may do by the wise words of a little boy.—*Quiver.*

THE DISCONTENTED SQUIRREL.

ON the top of a hill, 'neath a wide-spreading tree,
As soft and as snug as a dwelling could be;
A Squirrel had made her a neat little nest
Of acorns and leaves, and the nuts she loved best.

When the sun grew quite warm on a pleasant spring day,
Each little one ran in its branches to play,
Or with nuts in their paws, peer with bright little eyes,
As a passer below, through the branches it spies.

How happy they were, full of gambols and fun,
With plenty to eat, and no work to be done,
Excepting one squirrel, whose good temper went
They could not tell where, nor yet what he meant.

One day he had run to the top of the beech,
And stretched his head out as far as 'twould reach;
He saw in the distance a group of fine trees—
'Ah,' he said, 'I am sure they are better than these.'

So he said to his mother, 'Why do you stay here?
There's a much finer group of pine-trees very near,
Where I'm sure I could find, though my eyes should be shut,
Buds and soft tender cones, and a much sweeter nut.'

'My dear,' said his mother, 'I heard a man say,
As he stood somewhere near our beeches one day,
Those pine-trees are precious, and he must take care
That no squirrels create any mischief up there.'

'And pray what would he do?' said the saucy young sir,
'He could not catch *me*, so what should I fear?
His dog couldn't reach me right up in a bough,
I mean just to try it for once, anyhow!'

His mother endeavoured on him to prevail,
But he twinkled his eye, and whisked up his tail,
It made his young brothers quite frightened to see
How their bold brother squirrel ran off from the tree.

They anxiously watched where the tapering pine
Showed its point next the sky so graceful and fine;
And they all sat transfixed, as though they were logs,
When they saw there the keeper along with his dogs.

When at evening so snug in their warm little nest,
They heard him go by, and it broke up their rest,
And his words came as plainly as ever could be—
I've caught *one* to-day, as fat as can be.'

Then up to their mother they crept to be warm,
Knowing well at *her* side they could come to no harm,
Resolving 'twas best all her words to obey,
Since their naughty young brother had died on that day.

E. A. G.

LONDON WILLIAM MACINTOSH, 24 PATERNOSTER ROW.
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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. V.] MAY, 1869. [One Penny.

'Pincher and I.'

PINCHER AND I.

TOGETHER we rambled, together we grew:
Many plagues had the household, but we were the two
Who were counted the worst; all doings reviled,
Were sure to be done by 'that dog and that child.'

If my own kin or kind had demolished my ball,
The transgression was marked with a scuffle and squall;
But with perfect consent Pinch might mouth it about
Till the very last atom of sawdust was out.

When half-pence were doled for the holiday treat,
How I longed for the toffee so luscious and sweet;
But cakes *must* be purchased, for how could I bear
To feast on a luxury Pinch could not share?

I fondled, I fed him, I coaxed or I cuffed,—
I drove or I led him, I soothed or I huffed:
He had beatings in anger and huggings in love,
But which were most cruel 'twere a puzzle to prove.

If he dared to rebel, I might battle and wage
The fierce war of a tyrant with petulant rage;
I might ply him with kicks or belabour with blows;
But Pincher was never once known to oppose.

Unkennelled and chainless, yet truly he served;
No collar he wore, yet his faith never swerved:
A dog has a heart—secure that, and you'll find
That *love*, even in brutes, is safest to bind.

ELIZA COOK.

A HAPPY HEART.

A LITTLE boy came to me this morning with a broken arrow, and begged me to mend it for him. It was a very handsome arrow, and was the pride of his heart, just then, so I did not wonder to see his lip quivering, and the tears come into his eyes.

'I'll *try* to fix it, darling,' I said, 'but I'm afraid I can't do it.'

He watched me anxiously for a few moments, and then said, cheerfully:

'Never mind, mamma, if you can't fix it, *I will be just as happy without it.*'

Wasn't that a brave, sunshiny heart? And that made me think of a dear little girl, only five years old, whom I once saw bringing out her best playthings to amuse a little homesick cousin. Among the rest was a little trunk, with bands of gilt paper for straps—a very pretty toy; but careless little Fred tipped the lid too far back, and broke it off. He burst out with a cry of fright, but little Minnie, with her own eyes full of tears, said,—

'Never mind, Freddie; just see what a cunning little cradle the top will make.'

Dear little Minnie went to live with the angels a few years ago, but we have a great many sweet memories to keep of her.

Keep a happy heart, little children, and you will be like sunbeams wherever you go.

THE FLOWER.

FLOWER upon the green hill-side,
Thou, to shun the threatening blast,
In the grass thy head dost hide,
By the tempest overpast.
Then to greet the azure skies,
And to feel the soothing sun,
Brighter, sweeter, thou dost rise,—
Tell me, flower, how this is done?'

'I will tell thee, as thy friend,
Artless, timid, whispering low:
To the blast 'tis good to bend—
He who made me taught me so!
While His teaching I obey,
I but fall to rise and stand,
Brighter for the stormy day,
Leaning on his viewless hand.

'When to Him I've lowly bow'd,
He with freshness fills my cup
From the angry, scowling cloud;
Then He gently lifts me up.
So I fall, and so I rise;
In the dark or sunny hour
Minding Him who rules the skies!
He's my God, and I'm His flower!'

GRANDMOTHER'S PET.

'LET him have the letter, the poor little darling,' said old Mrs. Smith to her daughter-in-law. Edwin cried until he had got what he wanted, and then was not satisfied until he tore it up. Mr. and Mrs. Smith were going a long journey and did not expect to return for a year or two. The young mother was naturally very anxious about the boy, and putting her arm around her mother-in-law's neck, begged her not to spoil the boy whilst they were away. 'Give him only what is good for him, mother,' she said, 'and do not let him have all he cries for.'

But the grandmother thought nothing too good for the darling, and soon began to let him have his own way. If she happened to be knitting he would give her no peace until he had got her knitting-pins. She quite made him ill with sugar-plums, and then, because he would not take medicine she did not *make* him take it, and at last he became so ill that he nearly died. He was very fond of poking the fire, and although his grandmother told him not to do so, he took no notice of her, but did just as he pleased.

'Eddie, darling,' said she one day, 'I am only going out of the room a few minutes, mind and sit quite still, and do not go near the fire.' But the moment she was gone, down from the chair he got, and put the newspaper on the fire to see how it would burn. The paper was soon in a blaze, and caught his dress, and burnt him very much indeed—the hair was burnt off his head, his arms and legs were scorched, and all this happened only the day before his father and mother came home. Judge then their sorrow to see their pretty little boy so disfigured, that even his grandmother would not have known him. But he was not too young to learn from this accident a lesson of obedience, and others may learn from the little story that petted and spoilt children are very likely to come to harm. W. M.

EMILY BARNES.

(*Continued from page* 62.)

THE next day passed, and Friday came. As it was baking day, Emily was very busy and hadn't much time to think of the tea-drinking. She was very proud of making the bread all by herself; and, when tea-time came, Tommy and his little sister begged for some hot bread for a treat.

'Well, you may have some if you like,' said Mrs. Barnes; 'it won't hurt you for once in a way.'

They were all seated at the table when Miss Ashton came to the door.

'Will you please to walk in, ma'am?' said Mrs. Barnes.

'Thank you,' she said; 'I thought I would just call in on my way home, to ask how Emily wasn't at the tea-drinking; but I suppose you wern't well enough to spare her, Mrs. Barnes?'

'Indeed, ma'am, was it the tea-drinking to-day? then I never heard a word of it, nor Emily either.'

'Oh, yes, mother,' said Emily, colouring, 'I knew it was to be to-day; but I thought you wouldn't be able to spare me, so I didn't say anything about it.'

'Well, that's true enough, ma'am,' said her mother, turning to Miss Ashton; 'I don't know how I could have got on without her; but I should have been very sorry to have kept her away if I had known it.'

'Well, Emily,' said Miss Ashton, with a pleased look, 'I have brought a cake for you, and I think you deserve it; it is just in time, too, for your tea, which I see is all ready, so I won't wait just now. Good evening to you, Mrs. Barnes.'

When Emily went to bed that night, I think she was happier than if she had been to the school-treat; and before she lay down to rest, she did not forget to thank her Heavenly Father for all His goodness to her that day, and to pray that she might love Him more and serve Him better for the time to come.

Grandmother's Pet. Page 67.

Sarah wading through the River.

CHAPTER III.

'Come along, Emily, we are all going out blackberry-picking, and we want you to come too; there's Ellen and Lizzie Green, and Sarah Giles, and Prudence May, and me. We shall have such fun; do come.'

'Do you think I can go, mother?' said Emily.

'Yes, to be sure you can; a good outing will do you good, you have been working so hard lately. Put on your hat, and take the tin can to put your blackberries into, and be off with you,' she said, smiling kindly on her little daughter.

So Emily ran off with Fanny Bate, who was a great friend of hers. They were in the same class in the Sunday-school, and always managed to sit together in church. The school-children's seats were just behind the singers and the harmonium, which Miss Ashton played, and there was generally a rush to get a place on the front seat. Sometimes, I am sorry to say, they seemed quite to forget where they were, and a dispute would arise, which the mistress had to settle.

But to return to our two little friends. They soon overtook the others, who had walked on slowly whilst Fanny waited for Emily. It was a lovely afternoon, and they were all in high spirits.

'Where's the best place to find the blackberries, I wonder?' said Ellen Green; 'I saw plenty on the road to Wakeham the other day, but I suppose they're all picked by this time.'

'Oh, yes, they're sure to be all gone; *I* know the best place,' said Sarah Giles; 'down in Farmer Brooks' meadows, by the river; I saw lots there the other day, and such fine ones.'

'Very well, let's go there,' they all said; 'it will be nice and shady there too.'

'Who'll have a race down this hill?' said Prudence May.

'I will,' said Lizzie Green.

'And so will I,' said Emily.

'And so will I,' said Fanny.

And off they started, as fast as their legs could carry them, helter-skelter down the hill, throwing themselves on the grass when they reached the bottom, to wait for the other two.

'I'm sure it's a great deal too hot to run,' said Sarah, when they came up to them.

'Oh, no, but it's great fun,' they said; 'and then we have been resting all this time.'

When they reached the meadows, they all set to work very busily to pick the blackberries. They had been busy about half-an-hour, when Sarah, who was picking from some brambles near the river's edge, exclaimed, 'Oh, I see some beauties over the other side, I shall go and get them.'

'I don't think it's worth while to go round all that way, when my basket is nearly full,' said Fanny Bate, who was standing near her.

'Oh, but I don't mean to go round by the bridge,' replied Sarah; 'I mean to wade through the river.' And, so saying, she sat down and took off her shoes and stockings.

She crossed without much difficulty, as the river was not deep just there; but none of the others seemed inclined to follow her example; and, indeed, they would not have found it so easy as Sarah had, for she was a good deal bigger than any of them.

'I've filled my can,' said Lizzie Green, presently, 'and I shall go on to the bridge and wait for you there.'

Lizzie was a very wild child, and her mother could never get her to sit still in the house for ten minutes together. She was always out running about and getting into mischief, and would come home with her frock torn, and her hair streaming down her back.

'You're the plague of my life, you are, Lizzie,' her mother would say to her; 'I wish your father didn't spoil you so. You'd mind *him*, if I could only get him to scold you sometimes for spoiling your clothes as you do.' Upon which Lizzie would laugh, and say she knew father wouldn't scold her at all.

Now, when Lizzie came to the bridge, which was built of stone and covered with ivy, she thought it would be good fun to get up and walk on the top of the parapet, which was only just wide enough to take one foot. She clambered up, and had managed to walk about half the length of the bridge, when something startled her. Her foot slipped, and she fell.

When she left them, the others had sat down on the grass to wait for Sarah, who did not seem inclined to come back just yet. They were amusing themselves with

a game of hard-heads, when they heard a scream. The bridge was hidden from them where they were sitting by some trees and bushes which grew on the banks of the river; and so they had not seen what Lizzie was about; only Sarah had been watching from the opposite side. She called out to them, 'Quick, girls, run! Lizzie has fallen over the bridge, and is hanging on to the ivy!'

They all started to their feet, and rushed off to the bridge. When they reached it, and looked over, there was Lizzie, her hands clasping the top of the parapet, and her feet clinging to the ivy.

'Quick!' she said, 'I can't hold on any longer.'

They caught hold of her arms, and pulled with all their might, and Lizzie managed to rest her knee against a projecting stone, and so they dragged her up.

When she was safe on the ground once more, she turned very pale, and began to tremble all over.

'Why, what's the matter, Lizzie?' they all said; 'you're safe enough now.'

'Oh!' she said, 'I feel so queer, I can't stand; and I'm sure I can't walk home.'

'What shall we do with her?' said her sister Ellen, who was getting frightened.

'I know,' said Emily, 'we'll make a sedan-chair, and carry her into Farmer Brooks', which is close by, and I daresay Mrs. Brooks will let her sit down and rest a bit.'

'Yes, that will be the best way,' they all said; 'but who will go?'

'I'm sure I can't,' said Sarah, who had joined them again by this time; 'I'm a great deal too tired.'

'I'll go,' said Emily.

'And I will,' said Ellen.

So, crossing their arms, and making what they called a sedan-chair, they stooped down and lifted Lizzie between them.

'Put your arms round our necks, and hold on tight,' they said, and off they started.

They soon reached the farm-house, and knocked at the back-door. Mrs. Brooks herself opened it, and asked them what they wanted.

'Please, ma'am,' said Ellen, 'Lizzie fell off the bridge, and we thought perhaps you'd be so kind as to let her come in and sit down a bit, for she's all of a tremble.'

'Fell over the bridge and wasn't drowned!' exclaimed Mrs. Brooks.

'No, ma'am, she fell on to the ivy, and we pulled her up again.'

'Well, to be sure, what things children are; bring her in here, and we'll see what's the matter with her,' said Mrs. Brooks, who had a kind heart, and was really fond of children.

So they carried her into the kitchen, and put her down on the old-fashioned horse-hair sofa. Mrs. Brooks bustled off, and soon came back with a glass of elder-wine.

'Here,' she said to Lizzie, 'drink this off, it will do you good; you're only frightened a bit, and you'll be all right again directly.'

And then she brought in a large piece of cake for them each, and three cups of milk. When they had eaten their cake, and Lizzie had rested for half an hour, Mrs. Brooks asked her if she felt better.

'Oh yes, thank you, ma'am; I'm all right again now.'

'Well, don't go playing such pranks again,' she said, as they thanked her and set off on their way home.

They found the others waiting for them at the bridge, and of course a great many questions were asked as they went along as to whom they had seen, and what Mrs. Brooks had said to them. When they had heard all about it, Sarah said, in a discontented tone,—

'I'm sure I would have gone too, if I had known you were going to have such good things.'

'But, Sarah, you know you said you were too tired,' replied Ellen.

Sarah did not choose to answer this remark, and did not recover her temper for some time.

When they reached Lakewater it was almost dark, and they all agreed, on parting, that they didn't think they should ever forget that day's blackberry-picking.

(*Concluded in our next.*)

THE TWIN SISTERS.

THEY had been born together,
In the same cradle lay,
And by the same fond mother,
Cherished from day to day.
And when they played together,
No stranger ever knew
The one child from the other,—
Like as two drops of dew.
They had grown up together,
Mind answering to mind;
Clinging to one another,
Like two frail plants entwined.
Oh! had they died together,
As flowers on the same stem
Wither in chilly weather,
Death had been sweet to them.
But Death, who still doth gather
The flowers that please him best,
Left one and took the other
To its Eternal Rest.

J. E. B.

David Playing on his Harp before Saul

SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF DAVID.

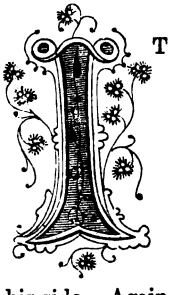
DAVID PLAYING ON HIS HARP BEFORE SAUL.

SAUL'S servants were right in thinking that the sweet notes of David's harp would soothe their master's troubled mind. No doubt David greatly pitied Saul's misery, and chose such sacred airs as were best suited to minister to the king's need. '*And it came to pass that when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.*' (1 Sam. xvi. 23.) But it was only for a time that any earthly power could give Saul relief. There is no true peace of mind to be found by any one unless pardon for sin has been granted by God, and there can be no pardon for sin unless the Holy Spirit leads us to repentance. After the effect of David's music had passed away, *the evil spirit from God came upon Saul again* (1 Sam. xviii. 10), and moved him to such acts of rage and cruelty as made him a terror to all about him.

How often David's services in playing for Saul were required, or how long he stayed with him, we are not told. But when Saul's malady appeared to have abated David left the king's court, and seems to have soon been quite forgotten there.

He had gone to Gibeah with a high character, and had shown himself worthy of it. He had been very useful, and, for the time, greatly beloved by Saul. But when his mission was fulfilled he was content to return to his home and his flock without once trying to get possession of the throne which he knew that he was to have. And this was not from a careless, easy-going disposition, but because his heart was so full of loving trust in God's power, that there was in it no room for over-anxiety or self-will. David was, indeed, putting into practice the advice which he has left us in one of his Psalms,—'*Commit thy way unto the Lord: trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass . . . . rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him*' (Ps. xxxvii. 5, 7); advice which we shall do well to remember when anxiously waiting for an answer to our prayers, or when, in times of trial and difficulty, we are trying to find out what course we ought to take in order to do the will of God Whose never-failing providence ordereth all things, both in heaven and earth.

THE STORY OF THE LITTLE LAMB.



IT was on a soft morning in May, when a certain little lamb was called from sleep by the soft tinkling of the sheep-bell. Slowly he raised his head, still keeping his fore-feet bent under his bosom, and looking with a sleepy eye after its mother, who had just trotted away from his side. Again the bell sounded, and the pretty little lamb unbent his feet and was soon leaping by his mother's side.

Now the field in which these sheep dwelt was a place of great beauty; the sunny hill, the sparkling streamlet, the shady tree, the green pasture, were all there; it seemed a quiet fold apart from the rest of the world—a pleasant place on purpose for that happy little flock. Now, the little lamb of which I have been speaking, was the darling of the flock; no other had so white a fleece, so mild an eye, so gentle a nature. One day as this little lamb was playing by itself, a short distance from the fold, he was espied by an eagle, who no sooner beheld him than he darted down, and, seizing him in his talons, bore him far above the little flock.

Oh, it was sad to see the mournful way in which they looked after their darling lamb, and how they ran till they could run no longer; and the poor little lamb caught the distant tinkling of the sweet bell it had so loved to follow.

Now, as the eagle was passing over a valley, an archer who was therein aimed

an arrow towards it, which went into its heart, and the little lamb fell at the archer's feet. Then the archer laid the lamb on his bosom, and took it home to his child, bidding him restore it if he could. The child had a tender heart, and he therefore took the lamb and bathed its wounds, and washed the blood from its snowy fleece, and wept for fear its little life was over. But the lamb began to revive, and the child was glad; and he took a silken cord, and placed it about its neck, and led it about with him wherever he went; and in the joy of his heart he thought the lamb must be as happy as himself. But, alas! it pined for the loss of its mother's love, and the peace it had known amid the happy little flock in the far-off fold.

One summer day, the child, being weary with long rambling, fell asleep on a bank of flowers, still holding the silken cord tightly in his hand; but looser and looser it became, till it quite slipped out of his grasp, and the little lamb fled away from his side for ever.

Onward and onward it went, not knowing whither. After a time it began to rain, and there was thunder and lightning. Oh, then, think how the poor little lamb would tremble; and now, when the thunder was not heard he would for a moment forget his sorrows, and stay to nibble a daisy or a blade of grass; then, startled by a sudden flash, would look upward in wonder at the strange light, then again driven onward by the loud pealing thunder. Well was it for the little lamb that no trees grew in that place, or he might have sought shelter under their branches, and so have lost his life. But on he went over a wide common, till he came to the foot of a steep hill. With weary feet, after much toil, he climbed up it, but when he had gained the summit, quite weak and trembling, he lay down to die; his eyes became dim, and his heart beat faintly in his bosom; but the thought of his mother and the peaceful fold, the cool, flowing water, the sweet flowers, and all things he had loved in the first happy moments of his little life were present to his eye; and the little lamb closed his eyes and wept.

But as his heart grew faint, and more faint, he was startled by the tinkling of a distant bell, and slowly raising his head, he beheld—ah! what did he behold?—his own little flock in his own happy fold; and new life awoke in his heart, and new light shone from his eyes, and new strength came to his feet, and in a moment more the lost lamb was by its mother's side, telling how he had been called back to life by the tinkling of that sweet sheep-bell.

J. E. J.

MOTHER, WHAT IS DEATH?

MOTHER, how still the baby lies!
I cannot hear his breath;
I cannot see his laughing eyes—
They tell me this is death.

My little work I thought to bring,
And sat down by his bed,
And pleasantly I tried to sing—
They hushed me—he is dead.

They say that he again will rise,
More beautiful than now;
That God will bless him in the skies—
Oh, mother, tell me how?

'Daughter, do you remember, dear,
The cold, dark thing you brought,
And laid upon the casement here,—
A withered worm, you thought?

'I told you the Almighty power
Could break that withered shell,
And show you, in a future hour,
Something would please you well.

'Look at the chrysalis, my love,
An empty shell it lies;
Now raise your wandering glance above,
To where yon insect flies!'

'Oh, yes, mamma! how very gay
Its wings of starry gold;
And see! it lightly flies away,
Beyond my gentle hold.

'Oh, mother, now I know full well,
If God that worm can change,
And draw it from this broken cell,
On golden wings to range.

'How beautiful will brother be,
When God shall give him wings,
Above this dying world to flee,
And live with heavenly things!'

MRS. GILMAN.

THE LITTLE MOTHER.

OH! take us to our mother's room,
Two little voices said;
'We have not wished her yet Good-night,
Oh! take us not to bed.'

The tears fell from their sister's cheek;
She led them past the door,
And whispered with a broken voice,—
'Dear mother is no more.'

'Where is she then? Oh! tell us where
Our mother dear is gone?
She surely loved us both too well
To leave us here alone.'

'She 's gone to heaven,' the maiden said,
'She watches from the sky.
And you shall go, if you are good,
And see her by-and-bye.'

'Oh, who will be our mother now?'
Each little mourner cried;
'I'd rather than our mother dear
God took all else beside.'

She kissed their little pouting lips,
She kissed each clouded brow,
And whispered with a gentle voice,
'I'll be your mother now.'

'Dear little mother,' both replied,
'We'll love you and obey,
And pray that God won't suffer us
Wrong things to do or say.

And we will thank Him in our prayers,
For having kindly given,
A little mother upon earth
As well as one in heaven!'

That night she took a mother's part,
She wiped their tears away;
And led them to their little room
Their evening prayers to say.

And while she watched beside the bed,
And kissed them when asleep,
She heard a voice, as if from heaven,
'Be faithful, *do* not weep.'

And often when with household cares,
Her heart had vainly striven,
This thought her failing strength renewed,
'Mother looks down from heaven!'

God give thee, little mother, strength
Thy heavy lot to bear;
Angels, smile on her smiles of light,
And tend her with your care.

AN HUMBLE-BEE.

MAGGIE and her mother came from the city to Farmer Smith's. Farmer Smith was Maggie's mother's uncle, and was therefore great-uncle to Maggie. He was very glad to see Maggie and her mother. It was a beautiful farm. The house was not as fine as Maggie's father's house in the city, therefore she was proud of *her* house, and did not properly value the contents of the farm-house. One day she took a walk round the farm and in the fields with her mother and Farmer Smith.

A trout was swimming in the trout-brook, a spider busy spinning his web, a flower was making honey, and a bird was flying over head from tree to tree.

'Can you swim like a fish, Maggie?' asked Farmer Smith.

'No,' said Maggie, 'I am sure I cannot.'

'Can you spin like a spider?' asked Farmer Smith.

'No, nobody can spin just like a spider.'

'Can you make honey like the clover?'

'I wish I could, but I can't,' said Maggie.

'Can you fly like a bird, Maggie?'

'No, indeed,' cried Maggie.

'Can you hiss like a goose, Maggie?' asked her mother.

Maggie did not know, but she could do that; so she tried to hiss, hiss, hiss.

'Well, Maggie,' said her mother, 'if you cannot spin like a spider, nor make honey like a clover, nor swim like a fish, nor fly like a bird, but can only hiss like a goose, I am sure it becomes you to be very humble, for all these things are in some respects greatly superior to you.'

Maggie looked as if she did not expect such a turn to the talk. It was a good turn, as it taught a good little lesson in humility, which people are apt enough not to think of. Maggie saw it was, for she looked up to her mother, and said, 'But, mother, you have turned me into an HUMBLE-BEE.'

THE FIVE SHILLING PIECE.

HETTY JONES had a very bad and ugly trick of biting her nails, till her finger-end looked so thick, that no one would have dreamed that she was a little lady, for little ladies generally have neat and clean hands and nails. Of course servants who clean pans and grates, and those who have to work hard, cannot keep their hands very neat and clean, and no one expects them to do so; but it is different with those who have not such work to do. Biting nails is an ugly trick, and yet it is one that many children (and grown-up people too) seem very fond of; though really you would wonder what pleasure it can be to them, for, besides making the fingers ugly, it makes them quite sore sometimes. Hetty's mother was vexed that her little girl would not try to overcome this bad habit; she had tried everything she could think of to cure her of it; she had put bitter aloes on the finger-ends to make them taste nasty, and she had tied her hands up in bags, but Hetty did not seem to mind the bitter taste, nor was she ashamed of going about with her hands in bags.

At last Mrs. Jones promised that if Hetty would give up this trick she would give her five shillings to spend as she liked. Hetty had long wished for a doll which she had seen in the window of a toy-shop, and which was marked 'five shillings,' so she thought she really would try to earn the money for this beautiful doll by leaving off biting her nails. I am sorry Hetty would not try for a better motive, for she *ought* to have done it to please her mother, but I must tell the truth you know, and Hetty was not much better than other little children who have to be bribed to do what is right.

So Hetty began at once to cure herself of biting her nails, and whenever she put her fingers up to her mouth she thought of the beautiful doll, and down they went again. In about a fortnight she was quite cured, and her nails were grown almost up to her finger-ends. No one ever saw her nibble, nibble, at her nails as she used to do, so her mother gave her a new five-shilling piece. Hetty put it into her purse and set off to buy the doll. How pleased she was, and she thought of all the pieces of silk, and muslin, and calico, she would beg of her mother to dress it in. It must certainly have three dresses —one for mornings, and one for afternoons, and one to go to parties in. Aunt Mary would make a bonnet and a mantle, for she had promised to do so.

Just as Hetty had got within sight of the shop where the doll was, she saw a little shabby girl holding such a poor, thin baby in her arms; this shabby child was looking with longing eyes into a cook-shop, and poor baby was crying sadly.

Hetty said, 'What is the matter with your baby, little girl?'

'Please, Miss, he's hungry,' she answered, 'and so am I, and mother is ill at home; father's dead, and baby, and Johnny, and I, have had nothing to eat to-day.'

Hetty was a kind little girl, so she forgot all about her doll, and told the poor child to come into the cook-shop and she would buy her something. Just as she was going in she caught sight of the doll in the toy-shop window, and she was almost tempted to tell the beggar girl that she could not keep her promise of giving her some food in the cook-shop; but when she looked again at the half-starved baby and the hungry eyes of the girl, she determined not to mind the doll. So Hetty and the two children went into the cook-shop; Hetty said, 'Little girl, what will you have?'

The little girl said, 'Please, Miss, may baby have some bread, and that glass of milk?'

Hetty said, 'Oh, yes, but what will you have?'

'Please, Miss, I'll wait till baby has had his bread and milk, and then will you let me have a bit of that nice beef for mother and some bread for Johnny and me?'

Hetty said she should have whatever

she liked, and then Hetty sat down on a seat and watched the girl feed the baby. How hungry poor baby was, and how pleased his sister was to see him eat the bread and drink the milk; it made Hetty feel as if she should be obliged to cry, and she made up her mind that she would spend *all* the five-shilling piece over those poor people. When baby's hunger was satisfied, Hetty told the little girl to eat some bread and meat, but she would only have some bread, 'for mother would like the meat,' she said.

Hetty said, 'Little girl, what's your name?'

'Annie, please, Miss,' said she.

'Well, Annie, I have a whole five-shilling piece, and I mean to spend every bit of it on you, and your mother, and brothers; so come with me and tell me what you want most.'

Little Annie almost jumped for joy, and baby seemed to know that something good was going on, for he began to crow and clap his little thin hands.

Hetty paid for the bread and milk, and then Annie said, 'Please, Miss, will you go with me to a grocer's shop for some tea and sugar? Mother has wanted some tea for such a long time, and we have had no money to buy any with; and, Miss, may we have some treacle? for treacle is cheaper than butter or dripping; and, Miss, may we have some sago for baby, and some rice for puddings?'

Hetty bought all these things, and still had two shillings left. So Annie said, 'May we have two loaves of bread and a bit of flannel for a petticoat for baby? for he is so cold that he often cries.'

Annie bought two loaves and a yard of flannel for a petticoat, and then the money was all gone.

'Oh, how I wish I had some more money!' said Hetty.

'Thank you, Miss,' said Annie, 'we shall do now for a long time; *won't* mother like the tea!'

Hetty asked Annie to show her where they lived, and Annie took her down an entry to a small cottage, but it was tidy and clean. Hetty just peeped in for a moment, and saw the poor mother and Johnny, and then she went home, feeling *so* happy, far more happy than if she had bought the doll. She thought she never should forget how pleased the poor woman looked when she saw all the good things Annie and she had taken into the house.

When Hetty reached home her mother said, 'Well, Hetty, where's the dolly? It has taken you a long time to buy, so I hope it pleases you?'

'Oh, mother,' said Hetty, 'I hope you won't be angry, but I haven't bought the doll; I have spent all my money over a poor girl and her mother and brothers;' and Hetty told her mother everything that had been said and done.

'No, Hetty, I am *not* angry, I am very glad my little girl has spent her money so well; if you like you shall take some soup to the poor woman to make her strong, and some beef. I will send nurse with you to carry a bundle of old clothes for the children, and two blankets for the bed.'

Hetty said, 'Oh, thank you, dear mother, how happy they will be, and how happy *I* am!'

So Hetty and Jane the nurse carried the things to the poor cottage, and Annie and her mother thought that they had never been so comfortable since 'father' died. When Hetty returned home she said, 'Mother, may I spend all my pennies and grandpapa's shillings for poor people?'

'Yes, my dear, you may, and I will give you a sixpence for every shilling you save, and you shall have a box to put the money into; but you must always tell me when you want to spend anything, in case you are taken in, for many people *say* they are poor when they are only *idle* and *wicked*. When you see any one you want to help, come and tell me, and I will find out if the people deserve to be helped, and if they do, you can then spend your money on them.'

So Hetty had a box and saved all her money, and she gave comfort and happiness to many a poor creature who needed it; she also brought comfort and happiness to herself; for what gives such real joy as to feel that through a little self-denial we do good to others? Hetty had to deny herself often, for she wished for

toys and books as much as other children do; and when she grew older she wished for pretty ribbons and ornaments, but I believe she almost always resisted these temptations, and she found out the truth of those words of the Lord Jesus Himself, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. VI.] JUNE, 1869. [One Penny.

Locked up in Church.

LOCKED UP IN CHURCH.

'HOW hot it is to-day,' said little Ellen Roberts, 'and I have had so much dinner that I feel quite stupid.'

'Why did you eat so much dinner, then?' said Mary Gray; 'I never eat much on a Sunday, because of school and church; it always makes people sleepy and stupid when they eat too much.'

'Yes,' said Ellen; 'but when there 's a roly-poly pudding, it's very hard not to. I think I shall ask mother to let Saturday's dinner be the best, instead of Sunday's, because of school and church.'

'But Saturday is a cleaning day; besides, Sunday is the only day that father can be with us, so it would never do to change the good-dinner day.'

'Well, I expect I must make up my mind not to eat quite so much; perhaps, if I don't, mother will save me a piece of pudding for supper.'

This conversation took place between two girls on their way to the Sunday-school one very sultry, hot afternoon in October.

Ellen Roberts was the sexton's daughter, her father was the bell-ringer at the church as well, for there was only one bell at Claxton church. Ellen often used to help him, for it was not difficult to ring this one bell. Poor Ellen, she had good reason to repent having been greedy at dinner-time, for she was so sleepy at school, that she made all sorts of mistakes. When school was over, and the children went to church, Ellen and Mary walked together.

'Where shall you sit, Ellen?' said Mary.

'Mother said I was to go into our own seat, and perhaps she and father would come and sit with me,' said Ellen. So Ellen went into her father's seat, and Mary sat with the scholars.

Ellen seemed to have revived a little, for she sang and repeated the responses well till it came to the time for the first lesson being read. She then wondered how it was father and mother had not come, and then her thoughts began to wander about from one thing to another in a strange sort of way, till at last she fell fast asleep.

The seats in Claxton church were high ones, of the sort that are now happily being taken away in many churches; they were like those which the little girl described who said that she 'went into a cupboard and sat on a shelf,' so that Ellen was quite hidden from sight in a corner of the seat. No one missed her, and there she lay fast asleep all through the service and the sermon—even the singing did not awake her.

At last the congregation left the church, and Tom Roberts, Ellen's father, came to lock the church-door, little thinking that his child was asleep in one of the seats. On she slept for several hours. She was missed at home, but Tom Roberts and his wife remembered hearing Ellen say that her grandfather had asked her to go to tea with him, so they settled that she had gone there. Grandfather Roberts often took one or two of the young ones home with him on a Sunday evening.

When Ellen had been asleep for a long time, she awoke; for some time she could not imagine where she was; she rubbed her eyes and looked about her—she was in church to be sure, but where were all the people? At last she began to understand about it—she was locked up in church—what *should* she do? She ran to the door, but that was quite fast; the windows were too high up for her to look out of, and the vestry-door was locked. Ellen began to cry, for she thought she would have to stay in church all night perhaps, and it frightened her to be all alone in such a great place. It was foolish to be afraid, for God's angels are always about us to guard us from all ill, but Ellen did not at first think of this.

How quiet it was! every time Ellen moved it seemed to sound all over the church. At last she got into such a nervous state that she hardly dared to breathe. She had crept into the Squire's seat, for it was well cushioned, and there she sat, or

rather crouched, up in one corner. Again she fell asleep, and this time she had a dream.

She thought that she was still in the church, sitting close up in the corner of Squire Thorne's seat, wondering how she was to get out. She cried and sobbed for a long time, till at last she bethought her that the best thing she could do would be to pray to God to help her to get out of church, or, if not that, to take care of her and keep her from harm; so she began to pray. Whilst she was doing so, she saw a beautiful angel, and the angel said, 'God has heard your prayer and has sent me to show you what to do that you may get home again to-night, for God always hears any one who prays to Him, and sends His angels to help them when they are in trouble.' The angel then took Ellen into the belfry of the church. Ellen at once thought how foolish she had been not to remember the bell.

Just then she awoke. She looked around her, for she could hardly believe that she had been dreaming, and she half expected to see the shining angel near. 'God must have sent the dream,' she said half aloud, and she got up and went bravely down the church and into the belfry. She began slowly to toll the bell. She had lost all her fears, for her dream had reminded her that the angels of God were round about her to guard her from all evil. And here we will leave little Ellen whilst we see what effect the tolling of the bell had on those who heard it outside the church.

The Parsonage was close to the churchyard, and, when the first toll was heard, the clergyman and his wife and son were sitting down to supper—it was just nine o'clock. 'Dear me,' said the clergyman, 'who can be in church tolling the bell? whatever can Tom Roberts be thinking of? it must be he, for no one else has the key of the church.' So Mr. Bland left the table and hurried into the hall for his own church-key—his wife and son followed him, and they soon were at the church-door. Tom too, was there, and several of the villagers, who had been alarmed at hearing the bell at that unusual time.

'Tom,' said Mr. Bland, 'I thought it must have been you, but as it is not, whoever can it be?' The bell continued to toll, but no one seemed inclined to venture into the church; it never seemed to strike them that some one was locked in. But at last Mr. Bland said, 'Come along, what are you afraid of?' the door was soon unlocked, and when it was opened a voice cried, 'Oh, father, is that you?'

'Why,' said Tom Roberts, 'I'm certain that's our Nelly's voice. Nelly! Nelly!'

Poor Nelly ran down the steps, and rushed into her father's arms, 'Oh, father,' said she, 'I have been such a time in church; you locked me in; I was asleep: but God sent an angel to tell me to ring the bell.'

'What is all this?' said the clergyman.

Nelly told her tale, finishing up by saying, 'And I'm *so* hungry, father.' Tom Roberts explained how it was that they had not been afraid when Nelly never came home after church; he said that he and his wife were just on the point of setting off to her grandfather's to fetch her home, when the bell began to toll. When Ellen arrived at home and had eaten some supper, she said, 'Mother, it was all because I ate too much dinner. I know I was greedy, but I will try never to be so again.'

'Well, Nelly,' said Mrs. Roberts, 'you did eat a good deal, that's certain. Suppose, for the future, you save some of your dinner for supper, and then it won't do you any harm if you *do* go to sleep after it.'

THE EARLY HOUR.

EARLY to bed and early to rise,'
Ay! note it down in your brain,
For it helpeth to make the foolish wise,
And uproots the weeds of pain.

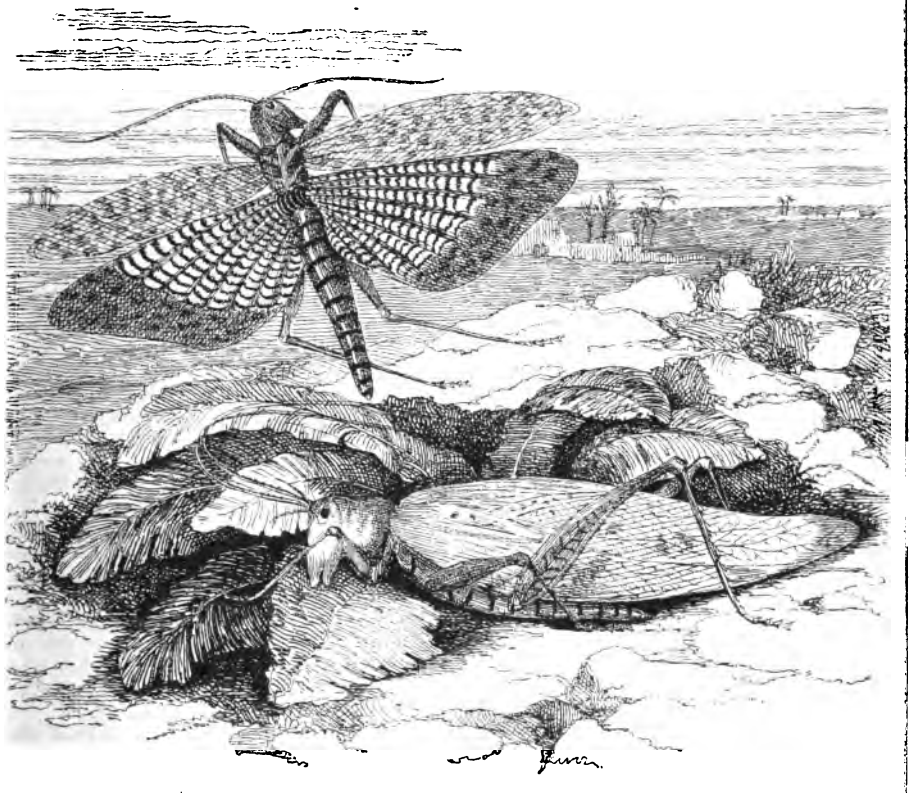
Full many a day for ever is lost
By delaying its work till to-morrow,
The minutes of sloth have often cost
Long years of bootless sorrow.

And ye who would win the lasting wealth
Of content and peaceful power;
Ye who would couple labour and health
Must begin at the early hour.

'Go forth in the early hour.'

If ye love the purest pearl of the dew,
And the richest breath of the flower,
If your spirits would greet the fresh and the sweet,
Go forth in the early hour.

ELIZA COOK.



THE LOCUST.

THE Locust is an insect very similar to the grasshopper and cricket. It is most voracious and destructive to the fruits of the earth in the Eastern and warmer climates, and it is dreaded as the greatest plague in whatever country it settles. It devours the vegetables, grain, and in fact all the produce of the earth, eating the very bark off the trees. Locusts appear in such large flocks as to darken the air, forming compact bodies of several hundred yards square; some of the inhabitants of those places infested by them, have cut trenches and filled them with water, and lighted great fires in their fields with heath and stubble, in order to destroy them, but these proved useless, the numbers being so great that the trenches were filled up and the fires extinguished by masses of the bodies without the smallest perceptible difference in their immense armies. They are used as food in various countries; the Arabs eat great quantities of them roasted; in Barbary they are boiled and dried on the roofs of houses, and it is stated in this way they taste like the sardine dried; they are also dried in bags and on strings; the Bedouins of Egypt roast them alive, and devour them eagerly; at Turin in Italy, locusts fried in oil or butter are sold in the markets. It was these insects with honey that John the Baptist fed on whilst in the wilderness.

'PEARLS CANNOT EQUAL THE WHITENESS OF HIS TEETH.'

IT was Saturday afternoon, and, therefore, a half-holiday. A party of little girls sat together on the grass in front of a pretty house which was almost hidden by roses and creeping plants; it was the home of two of the children, Marion and Lucy, and the other three, Alice, Maude, and Ruth, had been invited to spend the afternoon and drink tea with them.

The little girls were all very busy, for they had brought their dolls out into the garden with them, and were carrying them about, when Alice exclaimed,—

'Let us try and make leaf bonnets? I saw some once, and they were so pretty.'

'Oh, yes! let us try,' said the others; and they were soon busy cutting sycamore and filbert leaves into the right shapes to fit their dolls' heads, and then fastening them together with needles and thread. It was a more difficult task to do this neatly than any of the children had expected, for the leaves would not bear a great deal of handling, and were apt to split up along the fibres when they had been folded much. At last, Alice, who had seen them made before, found out the right way of doing it, and made a pretty bonnet for her doll, not one of the tiny absurd bonnets that are worn now, but a good useful size that would cover dolly's head, and protect it from the sun.

'Now we ought to trim them,' said Marion, when she and Maude had copied Alice's way of cutting the leaf and fastening it together.

'Yes,' cried Maude, 'and put strings on them too; they will never stay on without being tied. Let us get some of that green and white grass,—ribbon grass isn't it, Marion? that will be just the thing.'

'Run, Lucy, and gather some long pieces from the front border,' said Marion to her little sister, who had been too busy over her bonnet to speak before.

Oh, Marion, mine won't come right, it always splits,' was the doleful reply, as the child rose from the grass, and held up a misshapen attempt at a head-dress.

'Go and fetch the grass, dear, and I'll show you how to do another as soon as you come back,' said Alice, looking up.

Away ran Lucy, and soon returned with a handful of the long flexible blades, which, Maude said, seemed just made for strings.

By this time even little Ruth had succeeded in making a tidy bonnet, rather like an old woman's poke in shape certainly, but still a bonnet which fitted very well on dolly's head, and she held it up in triumph, to show that she had done as well as the elder ones. Marion caught sight of it, and exclaimed, crossly,—

'Look there, Lucy, Ruth has made a very good bonnet, and she's ever so much younger than you are? It's very stupid of you not to be able to make one too!'

'But I did try, Marion,' said the little one, ready to cry at her sister's harsh words; 'I tried very hard, but the leaf would split.'

'Never mind,' interrupted Alice, 'I promised to help you; I daresay we can do it between us;' and she put down her own unfinished work, while Lucy went over to her side and whispered her thanks.

'You have put the wrong part of the leaf into your bonnet,' said Alice, looking at the failure which lay on Lucy's lap, 'It would be sure to split if the thick stem in the middle was left in; we must cut that out, and only use the rest of the leaf where the fibres are quite small!'

'Oh, yes, I see now; that was why all mine split. May I try by myself?'

'Yes, here is a big sycamore leaf; that ought to make a beauty;' and then Alice took up her own bonnet and began to fasten in the strings, while little Lucy, with eager, clumsy fingers began her fresh task. But somehow she could not manage it, the bonnet would not 'come right,' and at last she was obliged to be content with making quite the worst of all. 'Never mind,' said Alice, 'we are all going to trim them now, that will be better fun than making them up.'

'What shall we do it with?' asked

Maude, twirling round her handiwork on the end of her finger, 'some of the ribbon-grass done up into bows?'

'I shall have some flowers,' replied Marion, 'very tiny ones, you know, like verbena or mignonette.'

'Shall we go and choose what we like best?' said Lucy, rising from her seat. 'Mamma told us we might have a few flowers if we picked them carefully.'

It was agreed that this would be the best way, and the children dispersed about the garden; looking anxiously along the borders to see what blossoms would best set off the leaf bonnets.

Lucy kept near Alice, Ruth wandered off by herself, while Maude followed Marion, who she thought would be sure to to find the prettiest flowers.

(To be continued.)

THE DEVOTED DAUGHTER.

MORE than two hundred years ago the people of England were fighting one against the other. Some for King Charles the First, and some on the side of the Parliament. There was a little girl, about fourteen years old, named Matilda Hare, the only daughter of one of the king's officers. When her father was called away to fight, poor Matilda was deeply grieved, and it was with difficulty that Captain Hare could tear himself from his child's embraces.

Poor Matilda had lost her mother when she was a child, and since she had been twelve years old she had become quite a little housekeeper. When her father came home tired with a day's hunting, he always found everything arranged for his comfort.

Although there was a housekeeper to manage the home, yet Matilda had so grown to know her father's ways and wishes, that she arranged and planned many things for him that others would have left to the servants. When Captain Hare left at last to join the army, Matilda determined to follow him. She gave orders to her maid to attend her, and the groom to be ready with a horse for himself, another for the maid, and a beautiful little palfrey called Bessie for herself, and then they started to follow her father.

They came up with the Royal army just before the battle of Edgehill was fought, and as the captain was alone thinking about his little daughter, Matilda rushed into his arms. He could not scold her, but felt much alarmed to find she had left home. She implored him not to send her back, and he could not resist her entreaty. She said her father knew what a trusty man the old servant was, and how much the maid was attached to her.

The battle was fought, the Royalists were the victors, and Matilda and her maid were quite like ministering angels to the poor wounded men on the field of battle. But at the battle of Marston Moor the soldiers of the Parliament gained the day, and Captain Hare was wounded. As he was lying in a state of extreme danger upon the battle-field groaning with pain, longing for a drop of water and thinking still, in his suffering, about his child, he felt a gentle arm round his neck; his head was carefully lifted up, and a draught of pure clear water quenched his parching thirst.

As this little scene was going on, a troop of cavalry was seen in the distance making towards them, and by the help of the old servant, the captain was removed to a neighbouring wood, where they found shelter in a cave. A few days after the poor groom was caught and shot by one of the soldiers, because he would not discover the place of his master's retreat. The maid who was sent into the nearest town for food never returned, and fearing lest she should betray them they had to seek a new place of concealment, which was very difficult to do, as Captain Hare could scarcely move. No one now could get food but Matilda herself, and in the picture we see her returning from the town with provisions. Fortunately after a few weeks a means of escape was found, and the captain recovered strength so as to take his little daughter with him to Scot-

Matilda carrying Food to her Father.

land. They remained there until Charles the Second came to the throne, and then they returned to their own home in peace.

W. M.

David sent to the Camp.

SCENES IN EARLY LIFE OF DAVID.

DAVID SENT TO THE CAMP.

ABOUT a year or two after David had departed from Saul's court, the Philistines invaded the land of Israel, and Saul and his army went out to *set the battle in array* against them. The Philistines were ranged along the side of a hill at Shochoh, and the Israelites were drawn up on a hill opposite. The Valley of Elah, nearly a mile in width, lay between the two armies. Through the centre of the valley flowed a brook, the bed of which was strewn with large pebbles, while the banks were fringed with shrubs, and here and there grew lofty 'terebinth' or turpentine trees (which are called 'oaks' in the Bible), under whose thick boughs many a traveller had found shelter from the scorching heat.

When the armies were drawn up ready to fight, the men of Israel saw a giant warrior, nearly half as tall again as an ordinary man, coming towards them down the sloping hill-side from the camp of the Philistines, and, as even every little reader already knows full well, this was the great champion, Goliath of Gath. Though a Philistine by birth, he was most likely a descendant of those *Sons of Anak* whose great stature had made them a terror to the men sent by Moses to spy out the Promised Land (Num. xiii. 32, 33). Most of these giants had been slain by Joshua, but some remained in Gath and other Philistine cities (Josh. xi. 21, 22). Their descendants no doubt bitterly hated the people of Israel, and longed to recover from them the hills and valleys of the pleasant land of Judah.

Goliath's height *was six cubits and a span*, probably about ten feet, and he was clothed in a complete suit of brass armour, of which Holy Scripture gives a full description (1 Sam. xvii. 5–7). *He had an helmet of brass upon his head;* and if the top of this bore the usual crest or plume, it must have made him appear even taller than he actually was. For the protection of his body *he was armed with a coat of mail*, weighing *five thousand shekels of brass*. This was most likely a breastplate, one part covering the breast, and the other the back, formed of metal plates overlapping each other like the scales of a fish, and about 155 pounds in weight. *He had greaves of brass upon his legs*, reaching, no doubt, from the knee to the ankle, and used to guard the legs from the iron spikes which were often put in the way of an enemy to entangle or wound him; and he had *a target of brass between his shoulders*, probably a circular shield, which, when not in use, was hung across the back by a thong of leather. *The staff*, or strong wooden handle, *of his spear was like a weaver's beam*, and the sharp pointed iron *head* weighed *six hundred shekels*. Of his sword we are told that David afterwards said, '*there is none like that*,' and gladly took it for his own (1 Sam. xxi. 9). In front of Goliath marched his armour-bearer, carrying a second and larger shield, and having also other weapons, which he might give to his master in time of need.

Descending the hill, the mighty warrior proudly strode towards the camp of Israel, and cried, '*Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? Am I not a Philistine and ye servants to Saul? Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me and kill me, then will we be your servants; but if I prevail against him and kill him, then shall ye be our servants and serve us.*'

As no one accepted this challenge, Goliath then used insulting language, in the hope of provoking some adversary to the combat, saying, '*I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man that we may fight together!*'

At these words all, from Saul and his brave son Jonathan down to the meanest soldier in the army of Israel, *were dismayed and greatly afraid*, so that they did not dare to accept the challenge; and when the giant had repeated his defiance in the

evening, both armies returned to their camps.

For forty days, morning and evening, Goliath came forth in the same manner and uttered the same words, but no champion advanced from the army of Israel to meet him, although Saul promised that he would give his daughter to be the wife of the man who should slay the Philistine—that he would enrich him greatly, and make his house free in Israel.

God in His Holy Word tells us that *the triumphing of the wicked is short* (Job, xx. 5). Though He permitted Goliath day by day to defy Israel, and Israel's God, He was about to bring upon him such sudden destruction as would show the heathen Philistines that *the Lord is King for ever and ever* (Psalm x. 16).

Among Saul's soldiers were David's three elder brothers, Eliab, Abinadab, and Shammar. One day Jesse, wishing to send them the provisions with which each man in the army was expected to supply himself, said to David, '*Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren; and carry these ten cheeses unto the captain of their thousand, and look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge*—that is, bring back some token that they are alive and well.

Early next morning David went to the valley of Elah, and *he came to the trench,* called in the margin of our Bibles *the place of the carriage,* being a circle of baggage waggons which formed a rough fortification round the camp. He found both armies placed in battle array, and the valley rang with the loud war-cry of the men of Israel. David's brave spirit was so roused by the sound that he left the provisions in the care of *the keeper of the carriage,* that is the guard of the baggage, and ran into the ranks, *and came and saluted his brethren. And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion,* Goliath advancing from the other side of the valley, and David heard his boasting, defiant challenge to the army of Israel. *And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were sore afraid.* It must have been with indignation and shame that David watched his countrymen's flight. He had heard how, of old, Joshua's army had slain or driven out the whole giant race from the land, and now he saw that Saul's soldiers, including his own elder brothers, fled at the voice of this one man, Goliath of Gath. David asked the soldiers who was this Philistine *that he should defy the armies of the living God?* And it may, perhaps, have been at this same moment that he resolved to offer himself as the champion of Israel, if no older and more experienced person should present himself for the purpose.

Does it seem to us a strange thing that a shepherd-boy should resolve to do what the oldest soldier in Saul's army dare not attempt? Had Goliath's insolent words so excited him as to make him forget how short was his own stature, how inferior his strength, how small his skill in the art of war? No; but he knew that *a mighty man is not delivered by much strength* (Psalm xxxiii. 16), and no doubt he said to himself some such words as those which were his own in later years. '*The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom then shall I be afraid? . . . . . Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear* (Psalm xxvii. 1, 3).' Firm faith in God's power, zeal for His honour, a strong sense of duty, and, above all, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Who, at his anointing, *came upon David from that day forward*—these nerved David's heart to be strong and of good courage at a time when the army of Israel was filled with terror and dismay. In other words, it was because he was so truly religious that he was so thoroughly brave. 'The spirit of boldness *for* God arises from strength *in* God.'

From the story of David's visit to the camp, we learn, as from many another passage of Holy Scripture, that God's Providence directs the course of what appear to us mere trifles.

What a small matter in itself was David's errand to his brothers! What a small matter we should have thought it, whether Jessie's youngest son or one of the older ones should take the provisions from Bethlehem to the camp! And yet David's

The Martyrdom of Ignatius.

arrival at the very moment of Goliath's appearance was to become his opportunity for distinguishing himself in the presence of his future subjects—the men of Israel—and for delivering the land from the invaders and their champion. Most true it is, that 'only our own littleness of mind prevents us from seeing the importance of trifles.' Let us, therefore, try not to neglect trifling duties, and, above all, not to give way to what we are tempted to think of as merely trifling sins. Just as a ship may be sunk by an overladen cargo of little grains of sand, so may a soul be for ever lost by wilful indulgence in these falsely-called 'trifling sins.'

THE MARTYRDOM OF IGNATIUS.

ONE of the most intimate companions of St. John, the beloved Apostle, was Ignatius, who was also known by the name of '*Theophorus*,' or '*one whose soul is full of God.*' For his great piety he was chosen to be the Bishop of Antioch, a rich and flourishing city. Here he remained forty years. It was about the year of our Lord 107, just nine years after St. John's death, that this holy and now aged man died as a martyr, or witness for Christ and His truth.

The Emperor Trajan, a bitter foe to the Christians, entered Antioch with all the pomp and magnificence of a Roman conqueror. The people of the city complained to him that the Christians stood aloof from the worship of the gods, as they called their heathen idols. Ignatius, being prepared to suffer or die for his Divine Master, proceeded, of his own accord, to the royal mansion, and boldly declared himself to be a Christian. The Emperor, after he had asked him some questions, and Ignatius had confessed his faith, passed sentence on him, that he should be carried to Rome and there thrown to wild beasts, to give a cruel pleasure to the people.

When the aged martyr heard his doom, he cried out with joy, 'I thank Thee, O Lord, that Thou hast vouchsafed to honour me with a perfect love towards Thee, and hast made me to be put into iron bonds like Thy Apostle St. Paul.' He then cheerfully embraced his chains, and having fervently prayed for his church at Antioch, and with tears commended it to the Divine care, he was hurried away by the soldiers who were appointed to transport him to the place of execution.

When he reached Rome, in order that his punishment might be the more conspicuous, one of the festival days of the Roman people was appointed for his martyrdom. He was brought into the amphitheatre, where the Roman citizens were often entertained by the combats of gladiators, and the conflicts of criminals, or of the hated Christians with wild animals. The aged Bishop of Christ's flock stood firm and calm in this terrible scene. He had commended the care of the Church to the guardianship of the Great Shepherd and Bishop of souls. And the lions were let loose upon him, and, like St. Paul and St. Peter, St. James, St. Thomas, and St. Andrew, and many others, he endured for a little while the light affliction here that he might reap in due time 'the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory' in another world.

THE LITTLE SUNBEAM.

A TINY sunbeam stole,
On a summer's day,
Through a little crevice,
To where a sick man lay.

It played upon the wall,
And upon his table;
With a smile he watched it
As long as he was able.

Much he loved the sunbeam,
Little dancing light;
It told of sunny hours,
Of skies and meadows bright.

Kind words are like sunbeams,
Stealing into hearts;
Scatter them most freely
Ere light of life departs.

EMILY BARNES.

(*Concluded from p.* 71.)

CHAPTER IV.

IN a week or two, Mrs. Barnes had quite got her strength again; and, finding that she could now get on at home without Emily's help, she sent her to work at the same mine as her brother worked at. Several other girls from the village, amongst whom was Sarah Giles, went to this mine; so Emily joined their party in going to work and coming home. She was a favourite with most of the girls, from her good-nature and readiness to help any one in trouble; but Sarah had, for some reason or other, taken a dislike to Emily, and never missed a chance of spiting her.

One morning, as they were going to their work, talking and laughing as they walked along, Sarah, who had fallen behind for a minute, called out,—

'See here what I've picked up!'

'What is it?' they all said, stopping, and waiting for her to come up with them.

'Why, it's a brooch, and a real good one too; it's lucky I caught sight of it, for it was almost buried in the dust of the road.'

They all asked to look at it, and Sarah handed it around.

'What shall you do with it?' they asked.

'Do with it? why, what should I do but keep it?' she replied. 'I'm not going to be so stupid as to part with it now I've had the good luck to find it.'

'But, Sarah, surely you'll try to find out who it belongs to?' said Emily; 'it would not be honest to keep it.'

'You just hold your tongue, and don't go setting yourself up for better than other people,' cried Sarah, sharply; at the same time giving Emily a push, which threw her down. She fell on a pile of stones, and cut her lip.

'For shame, Sarah!' cried the others, as they helped her up.

'It only serves her right for her impudence,' replied Sarah; 'she had better take care what she says another time.'

They were all rather afraid of Sarah, so nothing more was said then about the brooch, and they walked on.

When Emily came home that night, her mother said, 'Miss Ashton has been here to-day; she came to say that she had lost a brooch, and she thought perhaps some of you children might happen to pick it up on your way to work; for she was walking on that road last evening, and when she reached home she found she had lost her brooch.'

'Oh, then, mother, that's the brooch Sarah Giles picked up this morning; she found it on our way to work.'

'Did she? then what has she done with it, I wonder? I think I'll just run over at once, and tell her that it's Miss Ashton's; it isn't too late for her to take it up to the Parsonage to-night. But what have you done to your lip, child?' she said, noticing it now for the first time.

'Oh, it isn't much, mother; I had a fall this morning, and cut it,' said Emily, not wishing to tell tales of Sarah.

'But how came you to fall down? I hope you weren't wasting your time in playing by the way,' said Mrs. Barnes, seeing that Emily coloured.

'Oh, no, mother; Sarah gave me a push because I said I didn't think it would be honest to keep the brooch; but I don't think she meant to throw me down.'

'Why, she didn't mean to keep the brooch, surely?'

'Yes, mother, she said she shouldn't be so foolish as to part with it now she had it.'

'Well, I'll go over to Mrs. Giles' at once,' said her mother, taking down her bonnet and going out.

Mrs. Barnes found Sarah at home, and told her that Miss Ashton had lost her brooch the day before, and that, no doubt, this was hers.

'Oh, no,' said Sarah; 'the brooch I picked up is none of Miss Ashton's. I took it to the captain of the mine at dinner-time, and he said it belonged to his wife.'

'Oh, then,' said Mrs. Barnes, in a disappointed tone, 'I'm afraid it can't be Miss Ashton's after all.'

'Well, I don't see that it can very well belong to two different people,' Sarah answered, with a rude laugh; and Mrs. Barnes went away.

Now, this story of Sarah's was entirely false, and the brooch was lying quietly in her pocket when she was talking to Mrs. Barnes. But she was determined, as she said to herself, to make something by it; and, being afraid to keep it, lest her deceit should be found out, she sold it the next day, for a few shillings, to a pedlar who happened to pass through the village.

CHAPTER V.

One Sunday, a few weeks after this, Fanny Bate said to Emily, as they were walking together to school,—

'Have you heard that Sarah Giles was thrown out of a cart last night, coming home from Wakeham, and was nearly killed?'

'No; was she?' said Emily, very much shocked; 'how did it happen?'

'Well, I don't know exactly, except that the horse ran away, and I think Sarah tried to jump out; anyhow, she was brought home senseless, and I think the doctor called it concussion of the brain, or some such thing.'

'Have you been to the house this morning?' asked Emily.

'No: but I saw Sarah's sister Jane, and she told me about it.'

When Emily went home after church, she told her mother of Sarah's accident, and asked if she should run over and inquire for her. For, though Sarah had behaved so badly, Emily had no ill-feeling towards her. She remembered the bidding of God in the Bible: 'Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good;' and she tried to obey it.

'Yes, dear, you shall go over as soon as you have had your dinner,' her mother said.

Emily found Sarah still unconscious; but the doctor had told Mrs. Giles that there was hope of her recovery. In a few days more she was pronounced out of danger.

When Sarah was well enough to be allowed to see any one, Emily used to go and sit with her almost every evening, and would sometimes read a story-book aloud to amuse her. One evening, when she had finished reading, Sarah said,—

'Emily, will you forgive me for being so unkind and cross to you? I am very sorry for it now.'

'Oh, yes, Sarah,' said Emily; 'I've forgotten all that long ago; I think we shall always be good friends now.'

'But you don't know how wicked I've been,' said Sarah. 'Do you know I sold Miss Ashton's brooch?'

'Did you?' said Emily, in surprise. 'But I thought it wasn't hers at all?'

'Yes; but it must have been,' said Sarah; 'that wasn't true what I said about the captain's wife; I only said it to deceive Mrs. Barnes, and I've been so miserable ever since. I was so frightened the other day, when I thought I was going to die; I thought God was angry with me, and that I wasn't fit to meet Him. Do you think He will forgive me?'

'Oh, yes,' said Emily, earnestly, 'I know He will; He is always ready to forgive us when we are sorry.'

'I haven't told Miss Ashton yet,' Sarah continued; 'but I mean to, the next time I see her. I have felt so ashamed all the time she has been sending me puddings and nice things; she doesn't know how little I deserve them.'

Miss Ashton came the next day, and Sarah told her everything. She was very much grieved to hear of Sarah's deceitful conduct, but fully forgave her.

'And now, Sarah,' she said, 'I hope you will show your gratitude for God's mercy in preserving your life, by giving it up to His service, and trying to live to His glory.'

'Yes, ma'am, I hope I shall,' said Sarah, humbly; 'I will try.'

And Sarah did try from that time; but not in her own strength, for then all her trying would have been of no use. No, she learnt to look to Him for strength Who alone can give it, and she never looked to Him in vain. Nor will any of you, dear children, who have read this little story.

Fanny Bate and Emily.

The "PRIZE" *for* 1863, 1864, 1865, 1866, 1867, *and* 1868, *price* 1*s.* 2*d. each in pictorial wrapper; 2s. cloth gilt ; 2s. 6d. extra gilt, and gilt edges.*

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

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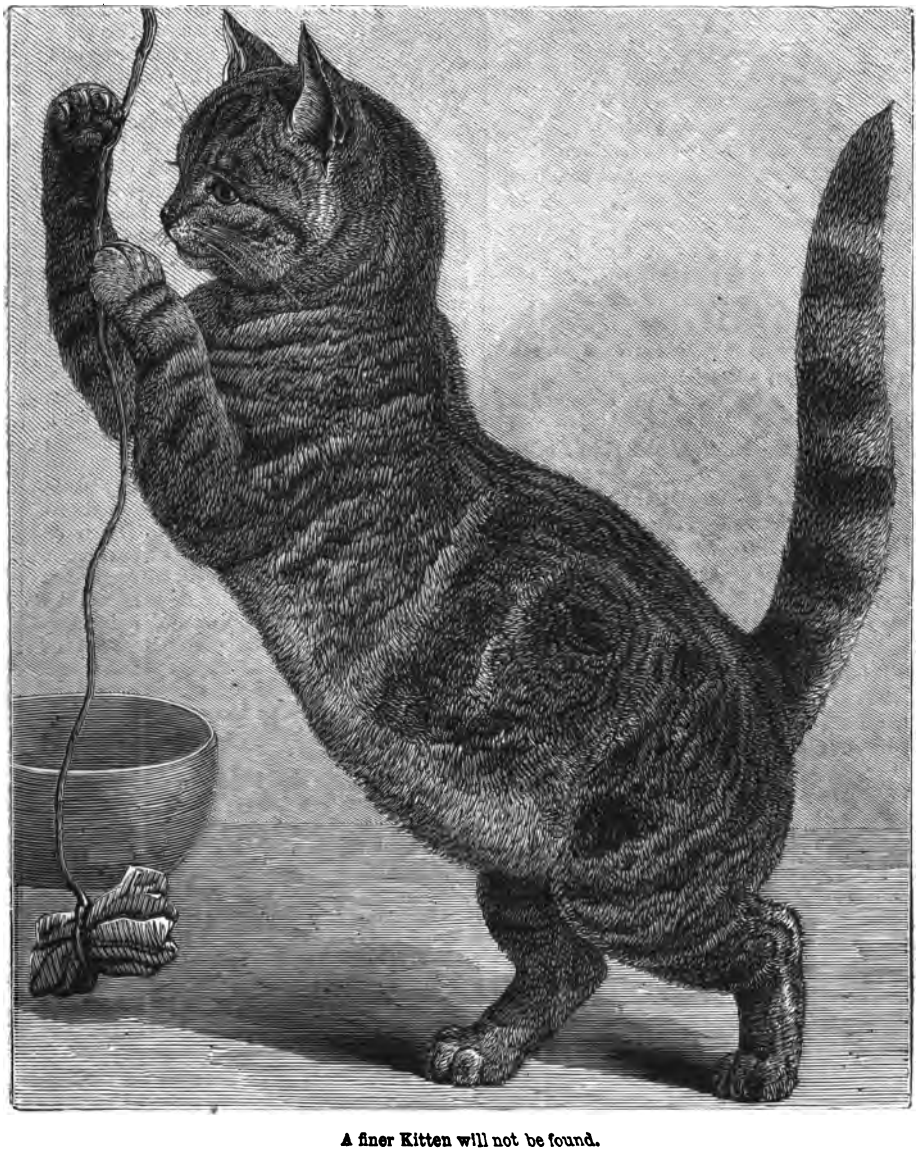


A finer Kitten will not be found.

THE KITTEN'S COMPLAINT.

I AM a kitten just six months old,
A regular beauty, I've often been told.
You may search through all the country round,
But a finer kitten will not be found;
And though it is true, as poets sing,
That beauty isn't the principal thing,
It surely is nothing more than right
To be glad one wasn't born a fright.
I think that I must have had a mother,
But before I could tell one paw from the other,
Somebody took me out of the hay,
Carried me miles and miles away,
Saying, coolly, 'I thought that, maybe,
You'd like a kitten to please the baby.'
Please the baby! just think of that—
What a horrible fate for a cat!
Mean, little wretch, what his mother can see
Lovely in him, is a wonder to me!
He clutched at my throat till I gasped in despair,
He jerked at my whiskers and pulled at my hair;
He poked his fat fingers straight into my eyes,
And laughed with delight at my pitiful cries.
Once, when he dragged me about by my tail,
And nobody came at my sorrowful wail,
I gave him a scratch in his face so red—
And what do you think his mother said?
Beat me, and called me an ugly, old cat!
Called him her lamb, and such nonsense as that.
Now, I should really like to know,
If there's any reason that you can show,
Why, a baby, that can only creep and cry,
Has a better right in the world than I?
I've made up my mind that the case is clear,
That if somebody doesn't interfere,
And take me away from that horrible child,
My cruel tortures will drive me wild;
Somebody surely will find me lying,
One of these mornings, dead or dying.
And then, if your heart has ever known pity,
Pray say, 'Here lies an unfortunate kitty,
(Who might have lived to be known to fame,)
Killed by a baby! what a shame!'

Little Corporal.

THE TWO VERSES.

Written for the children of a London Sunday School.

JOHNNY Mansell and Frank Burton were two little boys who lived next door to one another in the pleasant village of Weston. In many things they were much alike; they were both of them nine years old, and both were the eldest in their families. Both had kind parents who took care of them and taught them what was right. They went to the same school on week days and Sundays, and were both in the same class; then they both lived in the same kind of house, very different from the London houses in which you live. In the first place there was only one story above the ground-floor, and there was no kitchen downstairs with an area such as you have in London; but the front door opened straight into a kitchen with a large chimney-place and a little curtain along the mantelpiece to keep out the draught. Then in front of each house instead of pavement and road, there was a pretty little garden filled with sweet-smelling flowers, stocks and mignonette and beautiful red roses that climbed over the porch in front of the door. You will think that Frank and Johnny must have been very happy boys to live in such pretty homes, and I daresay you will wish that you too could live in the country.

Now Johnny and Frank had never been to London, but they knew something about it, because their teacher at school had told them what a great city it was; besides some of the people in the village had been up the year before to see the Exhibition, and Johnny and Frank both wished very much to come to London and see all the fine shops, and the great river Thames, and the beautiful cathedrals of St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey, and an hundred other things, of which their friends had told them.

So you see we can't have all we wish at

once, and Frank and Johnny, who could play in the fields and gather the sweet wild flowers in the hedges, had never seen many things which to you are common sights.

One Saturday afternoon the two boys were each sitting in their own homes busily occupied with a book. Saturday was a half-holiday, and so they did not go to school in the afternoon; but before they went out to play their mothers used always to tell them to learn the text which they had to say next day at the Sunday-school. The verse they were learning to-day was this, 'Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.' Now, if anybody had looked at the two little boys I daresay they would not have noticed much difference between them, but in reality there was a great difference between the ways in which they were learning. Frank was only learning the verse with his head, while Johnny was learning it with his heart. By this I mean that Frank merely tried to remember the words of his text, and did not trouble himself to think what the words meant, now Johnny not only tried to recollect the words, but also he thought over all that his teacher had said about them, and determined that he would try and do as they bid him, and obey his parents in all things. But Johnny knew that it was very troublesome sometimes to have to obey his father and mother, because they told him to do things that he did not like. He remembered that a year ago when he had been ill with the measles that his mother had told him to take some medicine. But the medicine had a nasty taste and Johnny did not like it, so when his mother tried to make him drink it he had closed his mouth and pushed away the cup and spilt all the medicine on the bed-clothes. When Johnny recollected this he thought at first that he would never be able to obey his mother in *all* things, he would in some: but suppose she should wish him to take medicine again! could he make up his mind to obey her and drink it up? While he was thinking of this he suddenly remembered that last Sunday when his teacher was giving him his text, that she had told him he would find it very difficult to obey his mother in all things, and that he must ask God to help him: so Johnny determined that when he said his prayers that night he would pray God to help him to obey his mother. Then he thought that perhaps his mother would require him to obey her before bed-time, so would it not be better to ask God at once to help him? So before he left his seat to go and play with his younger brothers and sisters in the garden, Johnny finished learning his text, and then asked God to help him to do as it told him. He had not been playing more than a few minutes when Mrs. Mansell called out, 'Johnny, come here, I want you at once.'

Johnny was at that moment climbing up an old apple-tree that stood in the garden, and had nearly reached the branch from which he wished to get a piece of mistletoe. It was very provoking to go all the way down without getting what he wanted, and he felt tempted to go on and pick the mistletoe first, and then go down and see what his mother wanted. But just then the text that he had been learning came into his head. He must obey his parents in *all* things, and his mother had told him not only to come, but to come at once. So Johnny slid down on to the ground and ran quickly to his mother.

'Johnny,' said she, 'I am obliged to go to your grandfather's this afternoon, and I shan't have time to get the water from the spring to wash the children in to-night, so you must take the light bucket and go and fetch the water for me.'

Johnny was about to say that he thought it very hard that he should have to fetch water on his only holiday, but again that verse came into his head so he answered,—

'Very well, mother; I'll fetch the water before tea.'

'You had better go at once,' said Mrs. Mansell; 'here is the bucket, and mind you go straight to the spring and back again, and don't stop anywhere on your way.'

(*Concluded in our next.*)

TO A FAVOURITE PONY.

COME, hie thee on, my gentle Gyp;
Thy rider bears nor spur nor whip,
But smoothes thy glossy, shining mane,
And loosely flings the bridle rein.

The sun is down behind the hill,
The noise is hushed about the mill,
The gabbling geese and ducks forsake
Their sport upon the glassy lake;
The herd-boy folds his bleating charge,
The watch-dog, chainless, roves at large;
The bees are gathered in the hive,
The evening flowers their perfumes give.

On, on, my gentle Gyp; but stay:
Say, whither shall we bend our way?
Down to the school-house, where the boys
Greet us with rude, caressing noise.
Where urchins leave their balls and bats,
To stroke thy neck with fondling pats;
Where laughing girls bring tares and hay,
And coax thy ears; well knowing they
Can sport right fearlessly and free,
With such a gentle nag as thee.

Pouting Jeanie.

Or shall we take the sandy road
Toward the wealthy Squire's abode,
Where the lodge-gate swings freely back
To let us take the well-known track?
I'll warrant me, that gate thou'dst find,
Though reinless, riderless, and blind.
Thou'rt restless, Gyp, come start, and go;—
You take the hill; well, be it so—
The Squire's abode I plainly see,
Has equal charms for you and me.
'Tis there thou art allow'd to pick
The corners of the clover rick;
'Tis there by lady's hand thou'rt fed
On pulpy fruit and finest bread.
The Squire himself declares thou art
The prettiest pony round the part;
Nor black, nor chestnut, roan, nor bay,
Can match with thy rich, glossy grey.
He says thy neck's proud, curving line
The artist's pencil might define;
With blood and spirit, yet so mild,—
A fitting playmate for a child;
So meekly docile, thou art indeed
More like a pet lamb than a steed;
He says all this! No wonder, then,
I think the Squire the best of men;
For they who praise thy form and paces
Are sure to get in my good graces.

ELIZA COOK.

POUTING JEANIE.

JEANIE and John were brother and sister. Jeanie had a temper which was apt to fire up like a lucifer-match when things didn't please her. At such times she pouted her lips, until they looked as if they had been stung by a wasp.

One day John did something which she did not like. Out flashed the angry fires from her large black eyes, as she pouted her lips until they looked twice their proper size. Her brother laughed, and said—

'Look out, Jeanie, or I'll take a seat up there on your lip!'

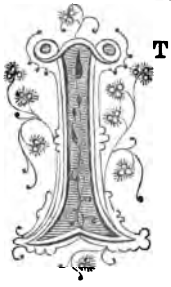
This little jest changed Jeanie's pouts into a smile, and she replied—

'Then I'll laugh, and you will fall off.'

Thus a soft answer turned Jeanie's wrath into good humour. Had her brother pouted too, both of them would have been made unhappy. I hope the boys will all speak kindly when their sisters pout, and I hope, too, that all the girls will leave off pouting; it spoils their good looks, and makes them *ugly in the sight of* God and man.

SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF DAVID.

DAVID REPROVED BY ELIAB.



IT happened that when David came to the camp at Elah, Jesse's eldest son, Eliab, heard his young brother's eager inquiries, and, as he well knew what sort of spirit the lad's was, he at once guessed the reason why he asked the soldiers so many questions about Goliath. You all know, perhaps you have felt it, that people are often vexed with others who excel them in any way. And so it was with Eliab. He felt envious of his young brother for being braver than himself, and he began to find fault with him and to accuse him of idleness and curiosity in coming to see the battle when he ought to have been taking care of his sheep. *Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride and the naughtiness of thine heart, for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.*

How this unkind rebuke must have tried David's temper! How it must have grieved him to be accused of such unworthy motives in the hearing of the soldiers who stood by! To be so lowly in his own eyes and yet be accused of pride! To be so earnestly trying to promote God's honour and to deliver his country from the enemy, and yet be blamed for naughtiness of heart, and that, too, by his own brother who might be supposed to know his character so well!

If David had indeed been what his brother declared that he was, he would have resented the affront by returning an angry answer. But his heart was so ruled by the Holy Spirit and his words and deeds were so guided by that mighty Helper that, much as he must have felt his brother's unkindness, he governed his temper, and

by a soft answer tried to turn away Eliab's wrath. All that he said was this: *What have I now done? Is there not a cause?* by which he meant, 'Is there not a just cause why I should offer to meet the giant? Do you not see that no one else is bold enough to take away this reproach from Israel?'

Then, to avoid further dispute, he very wisely *turned from him toward another, and spake after the same manner* (1 Sam. xvii. 30). He might have stayed to excuse himself by explaining that he had come to the camp in obedience to his father's command, and from kindness to his three brothers, whose supply of food he had brought from Bethlehem. But he wisely chose to bear unjust blame rather than run the risk of being drawn into a quarrel with his angry brother.

We must remember that when Samuel had wished to anoint Eliab to be the future king of Israel, God said: *I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart,* (1 Sam. xvi. 7) and then He caused David to be anointed instead. Now the conversation in the camp shows us what a vast difference there was in the characters of the two brothers? Eliab, like the rest of the army, fled from Goliath; David bravely resolved to slay him. Eliab was envious, angry without a cause, and uncharitable; David was meek, patient, and loving.

Great as was the victory that David gained that day over Goliath and the Philistines, it was a greater by far that he won in this struggle with himself. Do you doubt whether self-control is indeed more glorious than a victory over a giant warrior? It is true that many people think it cowardly and unmanly not to resent an insult. But what says God's Holy Word, which is our only safe guide in such a matter? It is so difficult to meet anger with gentleness and to meet pride with meekness, that David's son, Solomon, the wisest of men, says: *He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city* (Prov. xvi. 32). In another part of the same Book he says: *The discretion of a man* (that is, his *prudence*, as the margin tells us) *deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.*' It is in calmness and meekness that our real strength lies, and, therefore, let us think of these texts when we are ready to doubt whether meekness and courage can go together. Our Blessed Lord has said, *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart* (St. Matt. xi. 29). So when we find it hard to fight against passion or sullenness—and who does not find it hard to do so at times?—we must ask Him to teach us, by His Holy Spirit, how to win the battle with self.

When deep within our swelling hearts,
The thoughts of pride and anger rise,
When bitter words are on our tongues
And tears of passion in our eyes;

Then we may stay the angry blow,
Then we may check the hasty word,
Give gentle answers back again,
And fight a battle for our Lord.

With smiles of peace and looks of love,
Light in our dwellings we may make,
Bid kind good humour brighten there,
And still do all for Jesu's sake.

But you will, perhaps, ask, is there such a thing as anger that is not sinful? Yes; anger at the sight of sin is righteous anger. Our Lord Himself who so meekly bore every insult that His enemies heaped upon Him was angry when he saw the buyers and sellers making His Father's House a den of thieves. But His anger was caused by zeal for God's honour, not by any thought or feeling about Himself. A parent's anger is righteous when it is caused by the disobedience and ingratitude of his child. A boy or girl's anger is righteous when it arises from seeing poor dumb animals used in a cruel way, or little children ill-treated by bigger ones. But even then the feeling must be carefully kept under control, or it will lead us to say and do things which we shall regret when our anger has passed away.

SUMMER IN THE COUNTRY.

'TIS summer—joyous summer time!
In noisy towns no more abide;
The earth is full of radiant things,
Of gleaming flowers and glancing wings,
Beauty and joy on every side.

David reproved by Eliab.

Summer in the Country.

'Tis morn;—the glorious sun is up,
The dome-like heaven is bright and blue;
The lark, yet higher and higher ascending,
Pours out his song that knows no ending;
The unfolding flowers are brimmed with dew.

When noon is in the flaming sky
Seek we some shadowy, silent wood;
Recline upon a mossy knoll,
Cast care aside, and yield the soul
To that luxurious quietude.

MARY HOWITT.

'PEARLS CANNOT EQUAL THE WHITENESS OF HIS TEETH.'

(*Concluded from page* 87.)

'I SHALL have some of this,' she said at last, stopping by a bed of scarlet verbenas, 'there's nothing else so bright except the flowers that are too large; won't these look pretty against the green?'

'I shall have these,' exclaimed Maude, presently; and she pointed to a patch of 'Honesty' which grew among the shrubs.

'What *that!*' cried Marion, 'why it's quite a common flower, I wouldn't take it, Maude; you will be sure to find something better.'

But Maude knew when she had got what she wanted, and would not give up her 'common flower.'

'There is no other white flower that is small enough,' she urged.

'Well it would not suit me,' said Marion, 'but you can please yourself. Shall we go back to the rest now, and see what they have chosen?'

When they got back they found the other three busily at work. Ruth had pulled off a bit of 'Prince's Feather,' and said she would be different from the rest, and have her bonnet trimmed with 'a plume.' Alice had gathered a small bunch of the deep-blue 'Lobelia,' and was twisting it up into a little garland. Lucy was almost hidden behind Alice, and was busy about something, but nobody quite knew what, and, as Marion and Maude were the last to begin work, they made all the haste they could to get on and finish the bonnets before it was time to go into tea. So there was a pause of silent work, and the fingers went faster than the tongues.

'There, mine is done,' said Ruth at last, having only a plume of 'Prince's Feather' to fix at the side of her bonnet. She finished more quickly that the rest, and, having tied the bonnet on the doll's head, she propped the young lady up against a tree, and called the others to admire her. But they had no time to do so as yet, their own work had to be finished first. Alice was the next to complete her task, and very pretty the tiny wreath, with its bright blue flowers, looked. Then Marion put the last stitch in her scarlet verbenas, and held up her bonnet, with its brilliant circlet of blossoms.

Maude herself did not finish till a few minutes later. Her 'Honesty' was troublesome to fasten, but when her bonnet was done it looked so cool and pretty that the others all admired it.

'And it looks better on than off, which mine doesn't,' owned Marion, as Maude tied the grass strings in a neat bow, and arranged dolly's fair curls beneath her bonnet.

'Now, Lucy! we have all done, let us see yours!' said Ruth. 'You have been longer about it than any of us.'

Lucy held up the bonnet, and all the others burst out laughing. It was impossible to help it! The bonnet itself was of no shape in particular, but went in and out, and stuck itself up at the back in the queerest fashion, but the trimming was worse still. Poor little Lucy had not known what to choose among so many pretty flowers, and at last she thought she would solve her difficulty by taking little bits of a great many. So she had about a dozen different colours and shades on her bonnet, and, being anxious to get as much on as possible, she had dotted the little flowers all over the bonnet, so that it looked the funniest heap of odds and ends you can imagine.

'Oh, Lucy, how could you make such a hideous thing?' cried Marion, after a peal of laughter. 'It is like a heap of scraps out of mamma's rag-bag.'

'And, Lucy, it's all on one side; you will never be able to put it on your doll's head!' exclaimed Ruth.

'And oh! what a lot of colours!' chimed in Maude; 'it's the funniest thing for a bonnet I ever saw!'

'But how well she has fastened in the strings,' remarked Alice; 'the ends turned in and all, and much better than any of ours.'

The little face turned gratefully to its friend, and some tears which had come very near the surface, went back again without falling.

In a moment Maude's face grew grave, and she said, almost in a whisper, to herself, 'Pearls cannot equal the whiteness of his teeth.'

'Oh, Maude! what 's that?' cried Marion, who had caught the last word; 'what are you saying about teeth?'

'I knew what Alice was thinking of, that was all,' said Maude, who did not seem anxious to say more. But Marion insisted on hearing her words again.

'What was Alice thinking about teeth?' And then Maude repeated the sentence once more,—'Pearls cannot equal the whiteness of his teeth.'

Marion was more puzzled than ever. 'Whose teeth? what does it mean? Alice, do tell!'

'It 's only a story that William told us the other day. He is learning Persian, you know, and he found this story in a grammar. It was one day when he heard us finding fault with something, and now we often think of it.'

'Oh, let us hear it!' said Lucy. 'Is it pretty, Alice?'

'Yes, I think so,—I don't know,' replied Alice; 'I never thought about it 's being pretty; it's like one of the Bible stories.'

'It's about Jesus Christ,' put in Ruth, with a grave face.

'And isn't it in the Bible, then?'

'No, Marion; and William said he didn't know that it was true. He didn't think it was, indeed; but it might have been, I am sure.'

'And it was in a grammar, how curious!'

'Yes, a Persian grammar. William called it an "Eastern tradition," but I didn't quite know what he meant,' said Ruth.

'I know,' replied Marion, 'a sort of story; but do tell us, Alice.'

'I can't tell it just as William read it to us, but it said that one day, when Jesus Christ was living on earth, He and His disciples came into a large town where no one knew Him, though the people had heard about Him and the wonderful things He did, and how good He was. The disciples were busy getting supper ready and finding a place to sleep in, and our Lord went by Himself through the streets of the town.

'Presently He came to the market-place, where numbers of people were buying and selling things, and He walked through it, watching what they did. In one place He saw a crowd standing in a circle, and He went over to see what they were looking at. It was only a dead dog, so dirty and torn that all the people who stood by were exclaiming at it.

'"What a wretched beast!" said one; "he must have been hanged for thieving; look at the rope round his neck."

'"And he must have been fighting!" cried another; "his ears are all torn and bleeding."

'"How he smells," said another, turning away, "kick him out of sight, he is not fit to be looked at."

'And then, through all this abuse of the poor dead beast, there came the words—

'"Pearls cannot equal the whiteness of his teeth."

'And the people wondering who it was that spoke, turned towards our Lord, and gazed on Him with amazement, and at last they said,—

'"Surely this must be Jesus of Nazareth. Who else would find something good even in the carcase of a dead dog?"'

The children were very silent when Alice had done speaking; the touching little story made a deep impression on them, and they were each thinking it over in different ways.

'I think it must have been all true,' said Lucy, at last. 'You know He never laughed at people, or made the worst of them in the real Bible stories.'

'No,' replied Marion; 'and when one comes to think of it, anybody can find out the bad things. All the crowd knew what a miserable creature the poor dog was, but they could not see the one good thing about him!'

'William said that we like finding fault with other persons because it's such a cheap, easy way of making ourselves seem better,' added Maude.

'But a very mean way,' continued Ruth; 'I'm sorry I laughed at Lucy's bonnet; I had forgotten the story or I wouldn't have done it.'

'What made you remember it, Alice?" asked Marion; 'I am afraid I shall forget it just when I ought not; things always go out of my head when I want them to stay in.'

'I don't know,' said Alice; 'it doesn't go out of my head, it stays of itself like poetry or a tune one likes.'

'I shall be sure to forget it,' Marion sighed; 'nothing stays in my head.'

The others all laughed.

'Why, Marion, you make yourself out very stupid, and you are cleverer than any of us.'

'About lessons, but not other things. Alice never makes the mistakes I do.'

'I know how you will remember it,' cried Lucy, joyfully; 'write it up large, and hang it in our room.'

'What! all the story?' asked Maude. I don't think that would do!'

'No, not all, just one bit of it, what you said first, you know,—"Pearls cannot equal the whiteness of his teeth."'

Marion and Alice agreed that Lucy's plan was a good one; and a fortnight later Lucy took her three little friends up into the bed-room to show them Marion's illumination, in letters of blue and scarlet and gold, of the words which neither of them afterwards forgot, and the remembrance of which made them kinder and more gentle towards other people for the rest of their lives.

C. B.

BABY'S TOY-BOX.

COME here, little darling, and sit on my knee,
And I'll tell you a tale, if you'll listen to me,
Of your own little self,
And of your pretty things,
And I won't make it last very long.
A tale of the baby and his pretty things,
And he'll sit still to listen while dear mamma sings.

The baby walks out when it isn't too cold.
Our sweet little baby's not quite two years old,
But he trots and he runs,
And he laughs and he plays,
And he says little words beside.
Our dear little darling grows older and older,
Our dear little darling grows bolder and bolder.

When the cold winter comes we must have some warm frocks,
When the cold winter comes we must have some warm socks.
Warm little socks
For white little feet,
And little red shoes as well;
A warm grey coat for this dear little sweet,
And some strong black boots for his two little feet.

Such a beautiful cup the dear baby has got,
With flowers and ribbons all tied in a knot,
Three red roses,
And six green leaves,
And some blue 'forget-me-nots.'
He can have his nice milk in his beautiful mug,
And we'll pour it out from the great white jug.

Baby has got a large box of nice toys,
And he tosses them out with a great deal of noise;
Toys that are broken,
And toys that are not,
To baby it's all the same!
Baby can build and baby can play,
And he's playing or sleeping the live-long day.

He has houses, and bricks, and a doll, and a rattle,
Horses, and donkeys, and all sorts of cattle;
Two little cows,
And ten little sheep,
And a lot of young pigs besides.
Unbreakable dolls, and untearable books,
A hammer, and three or four pegs and hooks.

All kinds, and all sorts, and all sizes of balls,
To bounce on the floor, or to bound from the walls.

India-rubber,
And worsted and wool,
Leather, and velvet, and cork.
He can never get tired of balls and of bricks,
For baby can play with them all sorts of tricks.

He has boxes, and baskets, and chestnuts on strings,
A large bunch of buttons, and round brass rings,
Three fir-apples,
And four great shells,
And a lobster's-claw besides.
Hurrah for the baby and his funny toys!
He 's the best, and the sweetest, and dearest of boys!

J. E. C. F.

JOHNNY'S FIRST BIBLE.

JOHNNY cared little for toy and candy shops, but he never passed a book-shop without wishing that he had money to buy something. He had many little story-books, but he had no Bible that he could call his own, and his great desire was to have one. It was no use, he thought, to ask his mother for one—he was too young. His brothers were older before they got theirs. So he thought he would spend no more money on story-books, but would save his pennies till he

had enough to buy a Bible. Often he counted over the pennies he saved, for the time appeared long; but he kept to his promise, and at last found that he had five shillings. With this sum he started off to Mr. Knight's book-shop, determined to surprise and please his mother when he should return and show her his pretty new pocket-Bible.

'Sir, I want to buy a Bible,' he said, as he bounded into Mr. Knight's shop.

'A Bible!' said Mr. Knight. 'What! can you read in the Bible so soon?'

'Yes, sir.'

Mr. Knight then showed a number of cheap Bibles; but Johnny put them aside, saying, 'I want a better. What is the price of those bound in red morocco, with gilt edges?'

'Five shillings,' said the bookseller.

'Well,' said Johnny, 'give me one of them;' and down went his five shillings on the counter.

Mr. Knight gave him a piercing look, and asked, 'Where did you get that money? Does your mother know that you have come to buy a five-shilling Bible? Are you sure you got those five shillings in the right way?'

Johnny's heart swelled with pride, grief, and anger. He burst into a flood of tears, and tried to speak, but he could not.

'I see how it is,' said Mr. Knight, putting the five shillings in his drawer and the Bible back on the shelf; 'go home and tell your mother to come and see me.'

Johnny saw that Mr. Knight thought him a thief. He ran home, threw himself over his mother's knee, writhing and sobbing with grief and not able to utter a word, till his mother was greatly alarmed lest he had been hurt. At last she understood the words: 'Knight—Bible—money—thief.'

'What!' said she, 'have you been to Mr. Knight's to buy a Bible, and he thought that you had stolen the money?'

'Yes—yes—yes,' he sobbed out.

She tried to soothe him, and went to see Mr. Knight.

Mr. Knight saw that she had been crying, and told her what he had done and why he did it. She thanked him for his well-meant kindness, but told him how he had mistaken the character of her son, and that it had well-nigh broken his little heart to be mistaken for a thief. She told him of the little boy's love of books, and how he had saved his pennies to buy a pocket-Bible, and that the five shillings were indeed his own.

The old gentleman begged the mother's pardon, and asked her to send her son back to him. As soon as he saw Johnny at the door, he called him into the shop, where he told all that had happened to some gentlemen who were there at the time. He then wrapped up the Bible and handed it to Johnny, and also gave him back the five shillings, saying,—'The Bible is yours, read it, and God Almighty bless you. Whenever you want a book, come to me. I shall not lose sight of you.' And to his dying day the old gentleman was a friend to Johnny.—*Author of 'Home Truths.'*

THE LITTLE DROP THAT FELL FROM THE BLACK CLOUD.

ONE summer day a dark cloud was sailing along through the air, and because it was alone it felt very gloomy; so it burst into tears and wept itself away. And some of its tears fell into the sea, and some upon the rocks; but one little drop went down into a deep valley, and rested upon a broken flower—the last and fairest of its race. It was a lovely blossom, left alone to die in the deep quiet of that shady vale. And when the tear fell upon the flower it smiled a happy smile, and felt that it could die in peace, for it was no longer alone, so it closed its soft, sweet eye, and went to sleep.

Now, close beside the spot where the flower had died, amongst the high green grass, a lark had built her nest, and, just as

she stretched her wing to meet the morn, the tear fell thereon from the bosom of the flower.

And so the lark mounted up into the air and began singing to a little sunbeam, and she told it the story of the tear and of the broken flower. And when the sunbeam heard it, he loved the sweet tear so much that it kissed it off from the wing of the sweet warbler, and took it up to the golden sun; and the sun made it one of his beams, and told it that because it had given comfort to that lonely flower in its last moments, he would make it his chosen herald, the first to awake the flowers at morn and the last to light the bee to her cell at even. And so the tear grew bright, and more bright, until it became a little stream of liquid gold, and every flower of the earth looked up and loved it, and all the minstrel-birds sang when they beheld it, and the streamlets, and the fountains, and the brooks, laughed a joyous laugh when it came down upon their bosoms, and all the earth grew bright with one pure smile.

'Oh! lovely, blessed tear! because thou didst comfort the dying flower, thou art become the brightest and the purest gem in the crown of the golden sun!

My little children, be ye mindful to comfort the lonely, the sick, and the dying, and ye shall not lose your reward. Do not forget that we are not placed here to do our *own* work, but the work of *Him* that sent us; we are not to prepare for *this* life, but the *life* which is to *come*. Oh, then, 'let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due time we shall reap if we faint not.' This little life will soon be past, but there is a country which shall abide for ever; a kingdom which knoweth no end; whereto, if we have been faithful, we shall one day be taken. Where we shall shine brighter than the sunbeam or the morning-star.

'And there we shall hunger no more, neither shall we thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on us, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed us, and shall lead us unto fountains of living waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes.'

J. E. J.

THE FIRST COPY-BOOK.

OR, THE LITTLE WRITER.

I HAVE got a copy-book,
Would you like to take a look?
It is all my own!

I am learning to be clever,
I've a copy-book! you never
Such a beauty saw.

I have got a bright steel pen,
And by the time that I am ten,
Without lines I shall write!

But that won't be just yet awhile,
Indeed I think I see you smile,
At thought of me so old.

This page you see is **m** and **n**,
They are useful to write '**men**,'
When you've learnt to spell.

You see I want to make my letters
Straight and even like my betters,
But so they *will* not come!

Indeed, indeed! I do take care,
But somehow they will come so square,
And some won't turn in time!

Then my hand will tremble so,
Just when I try to make an **o**,
And curl it right way round!

Then sometimes I forget a line,
Sometimes the up-strokes are not fine,
And thin, as they *should* be.

I try to make the turnings light,
For that's the proper way to write,—
And down-strokes dark and clear.

My tongue I never must put out,
Nor twist and twirl my head about,
Because I'm shaping letters!

My elbow near my side I keep,
My fingers, not all in a heap,—
You see I know the way!

In **i**, I like to make the dot
Not large and ugly, like a blot,
And cross the letter **t**.

I like to see a page all done,
And when I can get leave, I run
And show it to my mother.

I used to write upon a slate;
Now I've a book, I seem to hate
Such baby-work as that.

The First Copy-Book.

Oh, what a grand thing it will be
When my own writing I shall see
Without lines, like a man.

And then some books I hope I'll write,
Full of many things, and quite
A blessing to the world.

But first, perhaps, I'd better learn
To make my letters bend and turn,
And stand up, like the rest.

So now I'll fill my copy-book,
And make it pleasant there to look,
And see I've done my best. J. E. C. F.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. VIII.] AUGUST, 1869. [One Penny

Charley going to bed.

'LET ME DO AS I LIKE.'

CHAPTER I.

'I WISH I might do as I like; I wish I had my own way. I can never do as I like now, there's always somebody ordering me and telling me to do things.'

So grumbled little Charlie as he slowly mounted the stairs on his way to bed. He wanted to stay up later, and had sat very quietly in a corner of the room with his book of Sunday stories, hoping that his mother would forget him, and that then perhaps his father would say, 'Oh, let him stay to supper, now he's here,' as had happened once before. But Charlie's mother did not forget him, and when the clock struck eight she said, 'Now, Charlie dear! bed-time!' and he had been obliged to shut up his book and wish 'good-night.' But he did not do it cheerfully. He was angry because he had not got his own way, and began to think that it was very hard that he could not please himself, and do always just what he liked.

'Big people have their own way. They don't have to go to bed when they want to sit up, or to eat bread and milk every day for breakfast; and it's a great shame and not fair to be ordering us children about. Why shouldn't I do as I like?' muttered silly Charlie, as he took off his clothes and put them on the chair by his bedside.

Like a great many other little boys and girls, he fancied that when he was grown up he should have no one to please but himself, and never be obliged to do anything he did not like to do. He did not take the trouble to remember how hard his father worked, riding about all over the country to see sick people. And how often he was called up in the middle of the night, when he was just settled comfortably in bed. Or how tired his mother sometimes looked when the baby was cross and the other children troublesome, and how sometimes when his father wished her to lie down and rest, she would say, 'I must finish Charlie's socks,' or, 'Emmie's frock needs mending,' or, 'There are the children's lessons to hear.' No, Charlie never thought of this; he kept saying to himself that he would have his own way when he was grown up, and never do anything but please himself. And all the time he went on grumbling at the care which prevented him from hurting himself, and rebelling against the watchful love which kept him from harm.

I am afraid Charlie did not say his prayers that night, but got into bed with his heart full of bad thoughts and discontented murmurings. For a long time he tossed about and could not sleep. The sheets came untucked, and the clothes got all up in a heap, and Charlie tried to put them straight, but made them worse instead of better, and the blanket came up against his face and tickled it so that he could not settle himself comfortably. Bits of the church-service would come into his head, and the collect that his mother had talked to them about after the evening service would run in his mind, though he did not wish to think about it.

Charlie always learnt the collect for each Sunday, and used to say it to his father before they went to church in the morning. His mother used to be busy then, and could not spare time to talk to him, but after they had come home from afternoon service they all gathered round the fire in the dining-room, and then she used to try and make the children understand the meaning of the collect they had said in the morning, and often told them something about the meaning of the prayers that were used in church. The children found this a very good thing; for sometimes when the service seemed rather long, and Charlie had begun to yawn and fidget, or think about his rabbits, all at once he would hear the clergyman saying some of the words that his mother had explained to them, and then it was not so difficult as it would have been else, to call back the wandering thoughts, and be quiet and attentive till the singing began.

It happened that Charlie's mother had been talking to them about the second

collect used in the morning service, and as he began to grow sleepy all that she had said and all the naughty thoughts that had been running in his head for the last hour or two, mixed themselves up together. He fancied that he was walking home from church with his cousin Tom, and that he said, 'I wish I could have my own way.'

'Come along,' answered Tom, 'let's run away, then we can do just as we like, and have no one to mind but ourselves.'

So they set off running just at the top of the street, and ran all across the square, and down the narrow lane that led to the river, and over the bridge. Then they got into some fields, and went on running for a long time, till Charlie wondered that he was not tired, but neither he nor Tom wished to stop, so they went on through places which they had never seen before, till at last they came to the seashore, and there they sat down to rest.

It was a low sandy beach which stretched away to the right and left almost as far as they could see. Nobody was near them, and though the two boys were very well pleased at first to be alone, so that nobody could interfere with them or tell them what to do, they found it very dull work after a time, for they could not even throw stones into the water as the shore was entirely covered with sand.

'I say, Tom, let's go on,' said Charlie at last, 'I think I see something moving out there!' and he pointed away to the left, where at a long distance some little black dots were moving up and down.

'What are they, I wonder?' replied Tom, after he had made out the dots that Charlie pointed at.

'Nothing that will eat us; come on, old chap.'

And the two boys got up and went towards the dots. But walking on loose sand is very tiring work, and their legs soon began to ache, but they kept on bravely and began to see the dots growing larger and larger, till at last they found that they were people.

Then Tom stopped.

'Look here, Charlie, if we go there they will be ordering us about, and we shan't be able to have our own way a bit more than we had at home.'

'If they do, we will run away again,' said Charlie, boldly; and the boys went on close up to the people, who seemed too busy to take any notice of them. They wandered about first to one group and then to another; but nobody spoke to them, and as the people seemed to be doing very much the same kind of things that Charlie and Tom had been accustomed to see done before they ran away from home, they did not find anything very new or interesting. So they left the crowd of busy people, and went to the edge of the sea, and when they got there the first thing they saw was a boat with a man sitting in it.

'I wonder if he'd take us out for a row,' whispered Tom.

'I'll ask,' said Charlie; so he called out, 'May we go with you?' for the man seemed as if he were going to push off from the shore.

He nodded, and the two boys soon scrambled into the boat.

(*To be continued.*)

MORE ABOUT THE BABY.

NOW, my dear,
Will you hear
A little tale about my Baby?
You would love
The little dove,
She 's such a darling little lady.

Baby walks,
And Baby talks
All she can—and more beside;
Many a word
Never heard
Before in all this world so wide.

Every day,
After play,
A little sleep the baby tries.
Red and rosy,
Warm and cosy,
In her little cot she lies.

Or, not asleep,
Her eyes she 'll keep
Shut up close, and will not stir,
Till the bell
The good news tells,
'Baby's dinner 's come for her.'

Twice a-day
Besides her play
Baby takes a walk or ride,
Glad to go,
She likes it so,
And Nursey walks by Baby's side.

Baby loves
Her pair of gloves,
Soft and pretty, warm and good.
Baby's thumb
Will seldom come
In the little hole it should.

A little muff
Of whitest fluff
Is tied around the Baby's waist.
Within this muff,
When cold enough,
Baby's little hands are placed.

A pretty hat
Of finest plait
Baby has upon her head,
Velvet blue—
A feather, too—
All to dress this little maid.

Boots so strong
That trot along
Out of doors the Baby wears.
Slippers blue,
Or velvet shoe,
Baby has to go downstairs.

Clean white frocks
And curly locks
This sweetest Baby always has;
Pretty ways
And happy days—
Such a Baby never was!

J. E. C. F.

THE LITTLE GLEANER.

NOW our pleasant toil is done,
Homeward let us take our way;
See! the glorious setting sun
Warns us of the close of day.

Since the morning's early dawn,
We have worked with all our might,
Gleaning many an ear of corn
Which escaped the reaper's sight.

Homeward let us take our way,
Needing rest, but free from sorrow;
Through another field we'll stray,
Heaven befriending us to-morrow.

Summer Songs.

SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF DAVID.

DAVID CHOOSING THE SLING-STONES.

INSTEAD of being disheartened by the taunts of Eliab, David went on inquiring about slaying the Philistine, until at length his brave words were repeated to Saul who commanded that the lad should be brought into his presence. How David's heart must have throbbed with joy while he went towards the king's tent hoping to obtain permission to *take away the reproach from Israel!* Saul did not know David now when he saw him again. He did not discover or remember that the shepherd standing before him was the same who had soothed his troubled spirit by playing sweet melodies on the harp.

David did not remind the king of the service he had done him, but at once declared his readiness to undertake the combat with Goliath, saying, *Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.*

Instead of treating him with contempt as Eliab had done, Saul felt pleased with David's spirit. But he felt anxious for the brave lad's safety, and therefore tried to prevent his making the attempt. *And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.* (1 Sam. xvii. 33.) Now David must have had at least two reasons for being sure that God would give him the victory. About one of these he said nothing to Saul, nor would it have been prudent to speak of it; but he must have remembered the holy oil that Samuel had poured on his head, and must have known that the Lord would help His anointed against the man who had defied *the armies of the living God* (ver. 26). The other reason he did tell Saul. Quietly and and without any such boasting as Goliath's, he gave the king an account of the victory that God had given him over the lion and the bear when they attacked his helpless flock. Then he ended by saying, *The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.*

Saul could no longer doubt David's strength, and courage, and skill, so he gave him leave to undertake the combat, saying, *Go, and the Lord be with thee* (ver. 37).

The king now wished that David should be properly armed for the fight, but the Philistines some years before had taken away all the swords and spears of the Israelites, and had removed all the smiths from the land. The consequence was, that the army of Israel had to use bows and arrows, slings, and such other weapons as they could make without the help of workers in metal. But we read that Saul, and Jonathan his son, had each a sword and a spear (1 Sam. xiii. 22), and Saul now proposed that his own armour should be worn as David's defence against the sword and spear of Goliath, and that his sword should be David's weapon for slaying the giant. *And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass on his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail.* (1 Sam. xvii. 38.) But as the lad was not used to such a weight of metal he found that it only hindered his movements. Saul, we know, was very tall, and David was only a stripling, so that the armour was sure to be too big for him. Wherefore he said to Saul, *I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them* (that is, I have not tried them and practised in them); and so he took them off, and resolved just to wear his shepherd's dress in the combat.

Instead of the king's sword he decided to use his own sling, knowing well that the humblest weapon may be made powerful when its use is blessed by Almighty God. With this sling he could keep at a distance from Goliath and be safe from the blow of his huge sword and the point of his spear.

Though in our modern days a sling is only a dangerous toy, it was then the favourite weapon of the shepherds of Israel and was also used by part of the

army, but it required a great deal of practice to make it effective in war. The men of the tribe of Benjamin in particular were noted for being expert slingers with the left hand as well as with the right, and they could aim at a hair's-breadth without missing it (Judges, xx. 16). The sling was merely two strings made of hemp or the sinews of animals, and fastened to a piece of leather that formed the middle of the sling. In this was placed a smooth round stone; then the sling was swung once or twice round the head, after which the stone was discharged by letting go one of the strings. In battle, the sling-stones were either carried in a bag that hung round the neck of the slinger, or were placed in a heap at his feet.

Taking only his sling, scrip, and shepherd's staff, David went from Saul's tent to the water-course that flowed through the valley. Then, from the bed of the stream he carefully chose five round and smooth pebbles. He put these stones into his scrip, but he carried the sling in his hand (ver. 40), and then, crossing the brook, he went towards the Philistine camp to meet Goliath. No doubt as he drew near to the enemy's tents he lifted up his heart in silent prayer that God would enable him at the right moment to hurl the stone with a sure and deadly aim.

The spirit in which David went out against the giant is just that in which we should meet our foes, the devil, the world, and the flesh. We must use our weapons as bravely as if *all* depended upon ourselves, but because the skill to wield them successfully comes from God alone, we must trust in His help as thoroughly as if *nothing* depended upon ourselves.

And what are the weapons of our Christian warfare? Let us think about three, which, with God's all-powerful help, every child may learn to use.

First, there is Prayer — not the mere saying of words with the lips, but the lifting up of the heart to God — such prayer as David meant when he said, *I will call upon the Lord . . . so shall I be safe from mine enemies* (Psalm xviii. 3).

Then there is Watchfulness or Vigilance, and particularly that kind known as Self-examination, the looking into one's own heart by the light of the Holy Spirit to watch the doings of our deceitful enemy, self. Solomon says, '*Keep thine heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life, . . .* and *He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely shall be delivered* (Prov. iv. 23; xxviii. 26). And St. Peter, when writing about the tempter, says, *Be vigilant: because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour* (1 Pet. v. 8).

Above all, there is the use of God's Holy Word, '*the sword of the Spirit*,' as St. Paul calls it (Eph. vi. 17). Every text which we learn from the Bible should be stored up in our memories ready for service when we meet one or other of the enemies of our souls. It was this weapon that, after forty days of prayer and fasting, the Lord Jesus three times used in His victory over the devil in the wilderness. The following verses, by a good Bishop of our Church, link together the thought of that victory and of David's choice of the sling-stones. We advise our readers to learn them, and sometimes to use the last eight lines as a prayer.

Five pebbles from the brook
The shepherd David drew;
One of these five he took
And proud Goliath slew.

He went forth all alone,
No armour had he on;
But with a sling and stone
The victory he won.

There is a holy stream,
By God's pure well-spring fed;
Bright polished pebbles gleam,
Like jewels in its bed.

The Bible is that Brook;
The five Books of God's Law
Jesus, our David, took:
And one* from them did draw.

Unarméd and alone
He went to meet the foe;
And with that single Stone
He laid the Tempter low.

Lord, arm us with that Word,
With Faith in Thee our Shield;
We need no other sword:
Teach us that sword to wield.

Help us to put to flight
Our Ghostly enemy;
Help us like Thee to fight,
And give us victory.

* The Book of Deuteronomy: all our Lord's replies to Satan at the Temptation are taken from that Book.

David choosing the sling-stones

A CHILD PRAYING.

FOLD thy little hands in prayer;
Bow down at thy mother's knee;
Now thy sunny face is fair,
Shining through thy auburn hair;
Thine eyes are passion free;
And pleasant thoughts, like garlands, bind thee
Unto thy home, yet grief may find thee—
Then pray, child, pray!

Now thy young heart, like a bird,
Warbles in its summer nest;
No evil thought, no unkind word,
No chilling autumn winds have stirred
The beauty of thy rest:
But winter hastens, and decay
Shall waste thy verdant home away—
Then pray, child, pray!

Thy bosom is a house of glee,
With gladness harping at the door;
While ever, with a joyous shout,
Hope, the May-queen, dances out,
Her lips with music running o'er:
But time those strings of joy will sever,
And hope will not dance on for ever—
Then pray, child, pray!

Now thy mother's arm is spread
Beneath thy pillow in the night;
And loving feet around thy bed,
And o'er thy quiet face is shed
The taper's darken'd light:
But that fond arm will pass away,
By thee no more those feet will stay—
Then pray, child, pray!

REV. R. A. WILMOTT.

THE TWO VERSES.

(*Concluded from p.* 99.)

SO Johnny took the bucket and walked down the little garden-path to the gate that opened out into the lane. As he passed he heard some one calling him, and looking round he saw Frank Burton.

"What do you want?" he asked.

"Why," replied Frank, "I want you to come and play with me. Mother's gone out and has left me here to look after Polly, and it's such dull work."

"I can't stop, for mother has sent me to the spring," said Johnny; "besides, you can't mind Polly if you are playing in the garden with me;" and so saying he went his way with his bucket.

Like Johnny, Frank had finished learning his text, but he had not thought at all about its meaning, nor had he asked God to help him to obey his mother. So when Mrs. Burton told him to take care of Polly, instead of obeying cheerfully and readily, as Johnny had done, he had asked his mother why she wanted to go out; why she couldn't take Polly with her, and many like questions. But Mrs. Burton was obliged to go to the shop to buy things for the Sunday's dinner, and she couldn't take Polly with her, for Polly was too little to walk such a long way, and Mrs. Burton couldn't carry her, as she was obliged to take a large basket for her purchases. So, instead of joining his schoolfellows for a game, Frank had to stay at home to take care of his little sister. This made him cross to poor little Polly, and when she pulled his Bible down from the table to amuse herself with turning over the leaves, instead of taking it gently away, he gave her a slap and told her she was a very naughty girl to touch his book. At this Polly began to cry, while Frank went out into the garden to see what was going on. He felt much inclined to go down into the village to try if he could find some of his schoolfellows to play with. But he remembered that his father was at work at the bottom of the lane, and he could not go into the village without being seen by him, and if he found out that he had disobeyed his mother he would be sure to punish him when he came home in the evening. So Frank stood leaning over the garden-gate, watching any people who might chance to pass by. It was thus that he saw Johnny pass by to go to the spring, and now he is waiting till he should come back to renew his request that he would play with him. "What a time he's been gone," thought Frank; "I should have been back long ago." But in reality Johnny had only been away for a little while, and was at that very moment coming back from the spring with his bucket full of water. On his way home he passed a branch laden with fine ripe blackberries. They were the first ripe ones of the year, and Johnny set down his bucket meaning to gather them and take them home to his two little sisters, Bessie and Kitty. Just as he stretched out his hand to pluck the fruit he remembered that his mother had told him not to stop on the road, so leaving the beautiful blackberries he took up the

bucket again and walked back towards his home.

Frank had been impatiently waiting for him, but at last he had got tired of looking over the rails, and had sauntered off to the other end of the garden. Meanwhile, Polly had been left by herself, and, like any other little girl of three years old, she had not known very well what to do with herself. Frank had left her crying on the ground, but presently she got over her troubles and looked about to see what she could find to play with. Frank had taken his book away from her, but had given her nothing to amuse her instead. The little girl looked round the room, but nothing took her fancy till she glanced at the fire—it looked so bright and pretty with little dancing flames, she longed to hold some of it in her hands. But when she stretched them towards the fire the heat made her quickly draw them back again. Now there was a piece of paper lying on the hearth, and when Polly saw this she remembered that she had often seen her mother light a piece of paper at the fire, and she thought if she could do the same herself she should then be able to hold the flame in her hands and play with it. So she stuck the paper between the bars of the fire and presently it was all in a blaze. Rather frightened at what she had done, Polly threw down the paper, which fell upon her pinafore and set it alight. This frightened her more than ever, and as she was too little to know that she ought to throw herself on the ground, she ran out into the garden to find her brother. The air made her pinafore blaze higher than ever, and also set fire to her frock, and when Frank happened to look towards the house he saw his little sister running out all wrapped in flames and smoke. You may imagine what he felt when the thought flashed through his mind that this was his fault for not having taken better care of Polly. But Frank was not the only person who had seen this dreadful sight. As Polly came out of the house Johnny Mansell coming back from the spring was passing alone the lane. But no sooner did he see the child than he rushed through the open garden-gate, and emptied the contents of his bucket upon her head. The cold water put out the flame, and little Polly's life was saved, though she was badly burnt, and for some weeks remained very ill. Frank was very sorry to see his little sister suffer so much through his disobedience, for if he had done as his mother had told him the accident would never have happened; and I hope this made him more obedient in the future. As for Johnny, how thankful he was that he had remembered his mother's words, and had come back from the spring without stopping to pick the blackberries, for if he had been one minute later poor little Polly must have been killed. Whenever after this his mother used to tell him to do something he disliked he always thought of Polly Burton, and asked God to help him to obey his parents in all things.

THE LITTLE HOUSEKEEPER.

SEE how I put mother's storeroom to rights!
Look! here are the candles, and there the night-lights.
On your right hand the sugar, on your left hand the tea;
On the high shelf the honey made by 'busy bee.'
Here are jams too in plenty, of various kinds;
This jar contains candied peel, made from the rinds
Of lemons, and oranges, and citron, I guess—
Though I seldom have tasted it, I must confess.
Here are the arrow-root, sago, and rice,
Which for nursery puddings we know are so nice.
But, though Nurse says it's naughty, I do love mince-pies,
And plum-pudding, and those things Cook tosses and fries.
Now I'll show you the raisins and currants, so fine—
Mother says I am greedy to wish they were mine.
Here are pickles and sauces, some brown and some red;
And on this shelf the whitening, hearthstone, and black-lead.
Those smart-looking boxes are full to the brim
Of matches—don't touch them, or Nurse will look grim.

Mother's storeroom is big, and holds everything.
See this neat little bag for the pieces of string.
This is soap that is cut in these neat little squares,
And on straw you see lie all our apples and pears.
A few meddlars we have—Nursey calls them my brothers,
Though I'm sure I don't *meddle* so much as the others.
That the storeroom's tidy no one can deny,
And so I will lock it and wish you Good-bye.

R. E. P.

THE NEW BOOTS.

'MOTHER, my new boots have come home, look how well they fit; they will be good runners, I know,' said little Frank, who had quickly taken off the old ones and put on the new. 'Mother, may I not go out in them to-day?'

'No, my dear, you must keep them for best. Go and tell nurse it is time to walk, take the old boots away with you, and put them on in the nursery.'

Now Frank was, I am sorry to say, a vain little boy, he always liked to show off to his companions any new clothes that he had; and would strut about in them just as if his fine dress would procure him the love of all.

So he thought,—'I wish I might go out in my new boots. I am sure these nasty old things look shabby. Go into the cupboard and stay there,' said he, throwing them in with a jerk.

'Well, Master Frank, do you not wish to go out?' said nurse, coming into the nursery; 'here is your cap, put on your gloves, and come along. So you have got your new boots on! well, they seem very smart.'

Frank never spoke, but looked silly and hung down his head, not telling nurse that he ought to have his old boots on, for he thought to himself, 'Mother will never know; the others are shabby, so I will go out in these.'

'Well, Frankie,' said little Edith, 'come along. What is the matter?' seeing her brother's clouded face, 'Do you want to wheel baby's perambulator? Nurse will let you when we get into the Park, won't you, nurse?' But Frank walked on, not chatting with his little sister as usual, for he knew he was wrong.

They reached the Park, and soon found under the trees several other nurses with their little friends.

'Frank! Frank!' said Charlie and Tom Reed, 'look at this beautiful boat; we have been waiting for you to sail it in the pond.'

Frank quite forgot his boots in the pleasure of sailing the boat; he was soon laughing, running, and shouting as merry as any one of the party.

They had a long string tied to the boat, and sometimes they would let it float quite across the pond, then gently pull it back. However, a gust of wind carried it quickly round some rock-work, upon which the string caught.

'Mind, Charlie,' cried Frank, 'don't pull hard; see, the string has caught. What shall we do?'

For some minutes the boys were pulling the string, trying to loosen it, but in vain.

'Wait a moment, and I'll get it,' cried Frank; 'I am sure I can stand on that piece of rock, then with your stick I can hook it off; give me it, please.'

Frank was just touching the string, when, alas! the new boots being slippery and the piece of rock wet, as he leaned forward his foot slipped, and before he could save himself he had gone head first into the water. The cries of Charlie and Tom soon brought a park-keeper, who quickly had the dripping boy taken home.

'Oh, mother,' said Frank, the next morning, when he was still in bed, 'can you forgive me? It was all through going out in my new boots that I fell into the water. I am so sorry that I did not do as you told me.'

'Yes, my boy, I hope this has taught you a lesson. I have for a long time been grieved to see you growing so vain, you know that was the cause of your disobeying me; I cannot say that I am sorry that you fell in the water. I hope now my little son will strive to carry about with him "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit," which is far above all smart clothes or outward adorning.' ANNICA.

THE ROSE OF SHARON.

A STORY FOR THE CHILDREN.

TWO little girls, of the ages of eight and six, ran merrily about a garden, picking flowers; here a rose, there a lily, and again a violet, till their aprons were full of beauty and sweetness and they sat down to rest on a mossy bank.

'What a splendid heap!' laughed little Ellie, as they emptied them between them.

But Marion did not stop to admire. Her

head was too full of business ideas, and Ellie soon followed her example, and the two were making wreaths of flowers as diligently as if their lives depended on their exertions.

The birds sang, the bees hummed, the butterflies flitted gaily from flower to flower; but merrier than all were the little girls in the bright sunlight of that summer day. Suddenly little Ellie plunged her fat fingers into the heap and drew out a lovely crimson rose sparkling with dewdrops. 'Oh, you beauty!' cried she, and was going to weave it into her wreath.

Marion looked up. 'That's mine, Ellie!' she said, quickly, with a flushed cheek, 'I picked it,'—and she held out her hand, but Ellie drew back. 'The heap was for us both, Marion; I shall keep the rose.'

'Ellie, give it me.' Marion seized her arm violently, half throwing her down; but Ellie wrenched herself from her grasp, and ran, treading upon her own fallen wreath in her haste while Marion followed, shouting aloud in her anger, with her wreath dangling from her hand, and the flowers dropping one by one on the newmown grass.

What a sad change! Did you ever, dear children, hear the report of a gun on a beautiful spring day, and see a sweet singing-bird fall? I think it was as sad a sight to see these little girls as the sweet bird of peace fell wounded from their hearts. Ellie escaped round the corner of the house, and Marion walked quickly within with her complaint. Ellie was called, and the mother listened to their story by turns.

'Give me the rose, Ellie,' she said. Ellie put it in her hand. '"I am the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley,"' said the mother in a tremulous voice. 'Who is speaking, my children?'

'Jesus Christ,' said Ellie, instantly sobered.

'Mother is very sorry to see her little girls quarrelling thus about a poor perishing rose, and forgetting *Him* so soon. Do you remember last night, when we talked of this Rose of Heaven, how you each hoped it might be planted in your hearts and shed its fragrance there? And do you remember how you knelt and prayed to God for His Spirit to make it grow? And now look at this rose,' she continued, holding it up before them, 'see how its beautiful leaves have fallen through your anger. You have wounded this poor rose, but oh! dear children, how have you treated the Saviour?'

Ellie burst into tears. 'Oh, mamma, I have been very naughty,' she sobbed; 'you may have the rose, Marion. Kiss me, and let us play.'

'I have done playing, and the rose is spoiled,' said Marion, coldly. Her mother looked earnestly at her, but said nothing.

That night the children knelt to pray. Ellie again asked earnestly for forgiveness and a new heart. Marion *said* her prayers and went to bed; but the mother did not neglect to pray that night for her sinful, erring child.

That night as Marion slept she dreamed that she and Ellie were in a beautiful garden filled with more lovely flowers than she had ever seen. Glorious angels were winging their way among groups of little children dressed in white and singing sweetest hymns. Ellie joined; but Marion's heart was heavy, and she could not sing. Suddenly the voices swelled into exulting harmony, and died away, while an angel chanted the words, 'Behold He cometh!' and a glorious King appeared, attended by blessed spirits. The children flew to meet *Him*, and caught the light of His smile on their joyous faces. Marion advanced too, but the smile vanished as He pointed to a lovely rose which she was treading under foot. Then a cloud came over all, and a Voice came forth, and as Marion heard it she fell weeping on her knees, for it said, 'I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me. To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word.'

Then Marion awoke, and throwing her arm around Ellie, she prayed earnestly for forgiveness. And the Rose of Sharon again shed its sweetness over each young heart. H.

THE LION.

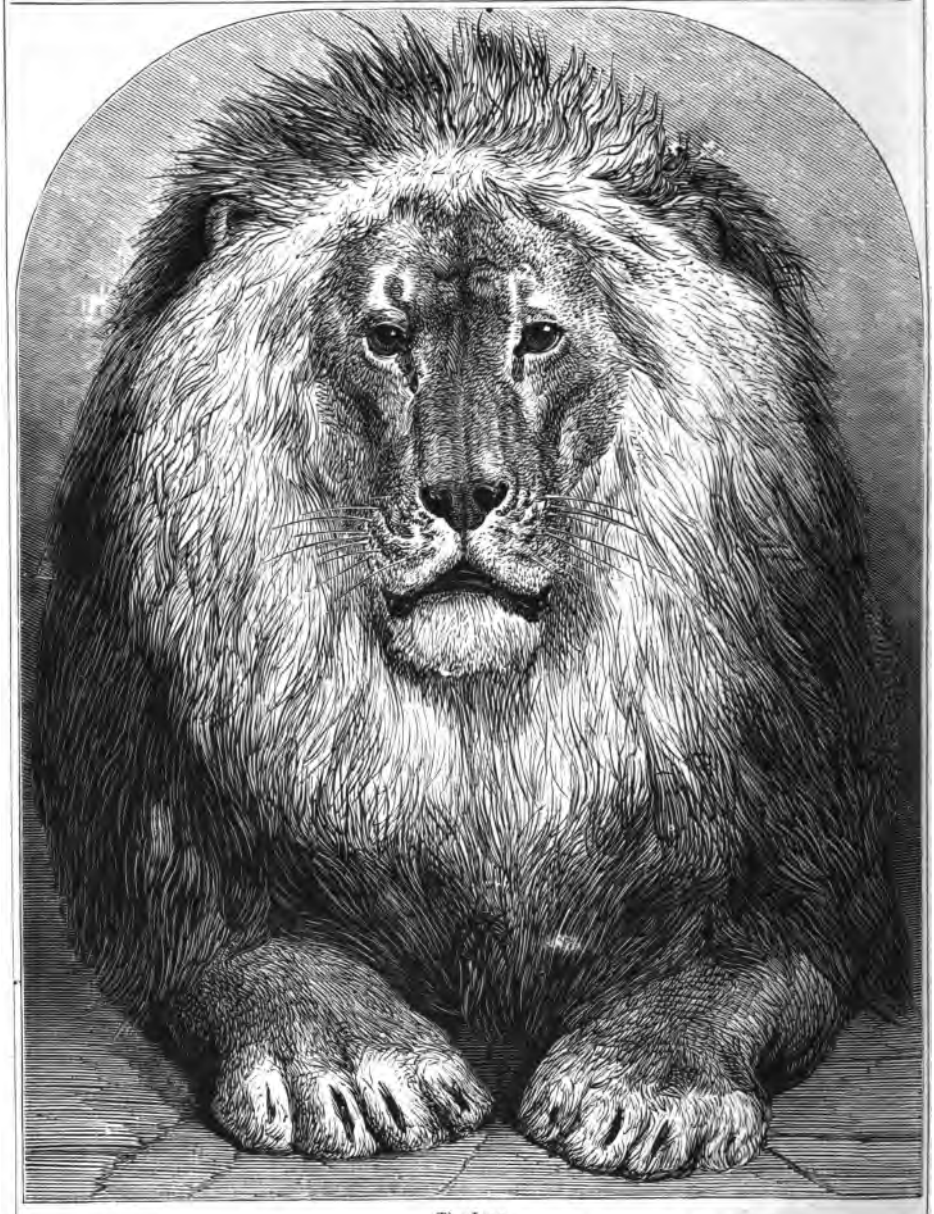
OUR readers remember, perhaps, the picture of the Baby Lion in the *Prize*. To-day we have the picture of a full-grown one. He was once a baby lion too; but has since grown into one of the handsomest lions that I have ever seen. The old keeper at the Zoological Gardens, where he lives, is of the same opinion, and said to me, speaking of him, 'I never was so *disappointed* in a lion in my life; we had him here when he was a twelvemonth old, and I never thought he would come to anything, he was the scraggiest cub we ever had.' He is very fond of his keeper and very obedient; and I have no doubt he would allow the keeper to go into his den and put him through all sorts of exercises, as they do in travelling menageries; but I am happy to say that it is not permitted at the Zoological Gardens.

Sometimes baby lions grow into big lions in a very inconvenient way. London being a very large place does everything on a very large scale, and it will amuse and astonish my little readers to hear that there is quite a market in London for wild beasts, and that lions and tigers are cheap and dear, just as sheep and oxen are cheap and dear, according to the supply and demand. Sometimes there is a glut of lions, and at others you cannot have one for love or money. The people who deal in these animals live mostly in a part of London called Ratcliff Highway; and their customers come from all parts of England and the Continent to buy beasts for travelling menageries, zoological gardens, and the like. One day, one of these dealers bought with several other things from a captain, a pair of puny, neglected, and half-starved baby lions for very little money; they were not bigger than many a good-sized terrier, if so large; and he gave them to his man to see what he could do with them, expressing it as his opinion that they would not live. Having to go on a journey on business, it was very natural that he forgot all about the little lions. I must tell you that these dealers store their animals in any place they can find for them. You may hear something rattling under the floor on which you stand, and you are told 'Oh, that is only a new bear I have got, and he is in the cellar.' The man who had charge of the little lions took them to a loft at the top of a house and fed them well, and they began to thrive.

About a year and a half after all this occurred, the man being absent, which very rarely happened, his master went to the top of the house to look for something, and in trying to find it, he opened a door; and to his dismay, two fine young lions burst through the opening and thundered down the stairs: all he could do, was to shout to his wife, 'Shut the street door! there are some lions coming down.' The woman, with great presence of mind, shut the street door, and then locked herself in the parlour awaiting the result, while her husband did the same in breathless anxiety upstairs.

The lions, finding themselves stopped in their voyage of discovery, returned the way they came, and finding their master's bedroom open, took the liberty of inspecting it. This gave him the opportunity of turning the key upon them, and of releasing his wife from her imprisonment. So far, all was safe except the looking-glass, and other articles of furniture with which they could be heard amusing themselves. But how to get them back again into their own apartment? This difficulty was soon solved by the arrival of their keeper, who took a worn-out birch broom, and opened the door. He found the lions asleep on the best bed, from which he drove them by making them feel the stiff points of the old broom. And by the same means he directed their steps upstairs, whither they returned even more speedily than they had come down.

'THE flower of youth never appears more beautiful than when it bends towards the Sun of Righteousness.'



The Lion.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. IX.] SEPTEMBER, 1869. [One Penny.

Little Jeanne.

LITTLE JEANNE.

IN the early part of the summer of 1866 I was staying with my husband on the banks of Lake Lucerne, which is, you know, in Switzerland. It is also called the Lake of the Four Cantons.

You might not understand all I could tell you of the country, but I think most children like to hear about others of their own age, and to be told what they have done and said; so I am going to tell you about a little girl I saw when I was at Lucerne.

It is necessary to my story that I should tell you something about this beautiful lake. It is somewhat in the form of a star-fish, and at the end of one of the branches is the town of Lucerne, or Lutzern, as it is called there. On the right hand rises the mountain called Pilate, about which a legend exists that the spirit of Pontius Pilate wandered there for years after our Lord's death; and this accounts, they say, for its stormy aspect, and summit wreathed in almost perpetual clouds.

I can bear witness to the frightful howling of the wind at night, but I think that it is owing to its rough, uneven sides, and to its rocks and caves, in which the wind sounds so dismally that it is easy to understand how superstitious people have tried to explain it by some wild story.

On the left hand rises another mountain, called the Righi. We soon found, that to go up the Righi whilst we were at Lucerne was a duty we were expected to perform; so we determined to go, and it was on this journey I met with my little Swiss maid.

We left Lucerne very early one morning, and with a light knapsack containing necessaries for the night we went on board a steam-boat, which landed us at a village called Küsnacht, at the end of another branch of the lake.

There we were met by a crowd of men offering alpenstocks for sale; and there we got into a carriage which took us to Immensee, on Lake Zug. There we had to wait an hour, and then the little quay became full of life and bustle, as the boat was seen gliding along the smooth water to take us up.

We were soon on board, and amongst the passengers I noticed a little girl about eight years old, holding her father by the hand as she walked up and down. There was something quaint in the little thing, and she reminded me of my Edith at home. She was as brown as a berry, and had dark-bright eyes; her hair was turned off her forehead and fixed with a comb, and she wore a bright pink muslin frock, which left her neck and arms bare, and on her head was a straw hat trimmed with a band of black velvet. There was a little cloak too, but this was not needed, and hung over her father's arm. All down to the clean socks and boots, seemed to speak to me of a kind mother at home, who had made the little girl so neat, and dressed her carefully for this holiday with her father.

As she passed me demurely I would gladly have taken her on my knee and kissed her for my dear ones at home; but as her eyes met mine, she turned her head aside hastily, and hid her face in the skirt of her father's coat.

We landed at Arth, where there was a public dinner at the small inn that travellers might refresh themselves before their journey up the mountain, at whose foot we had now arrived. Seated at the table I again noticed the little one in the pink frock. She sat beside her father very shy, but evidently very hungry; and it amused me much to see how, if she did not like anything on her plate, she took it up on her fork and put it on her father's, and in the same way helped herself to tit-bits off his. I sat at the other side of the table, and now and then the bright-brown eyes met mine, and then she would turn her head aside just like a frightened hare. What I much wished was to make her laugh, and at last I succeeded; but the colour rose under her clear brown skin, and again she hid her face in her father's coat. He remonstrated with her and I caught the words,—"Fie, donc, Jeanne!" and so I learnt her name.

Dinner being over we rose to go. Putting on the knapsack, and taking up our long alpenstocks, we prepared to quit the room; but as I passed the place where she sat the child could not resist the curiosity which tempted her to turn and take one last peep at me, so that I was able to nod to her and smile, and say "Adieu, Jeanne!"

We were soon on our steep winding road up the mountain's side, again and again stopping to look at the valley below, or to gather the lovely ferns and wild flowers that grew beside the path. We had to rest too, for at first it was hard work to keep walking up and up, though the variety and beauty of the road made the fatigue less obvious. Now and then a guide, returning with the luggage of travellers who had made the ascent the day before, came springing down the path; or a boy passed us, carrying pails of milk on his back. A little band of German students overtook us and went on before; and still we walked on and rested, and on again, much helped by our alpenstocks. The mule-path was further round the side of the mountain, and presently we struck into it, and after walking on a mile or more we heard behind us the trotting steps of the mules, and the riding party passed us on the way to the top.

I had thought to have seen the last of the child when I left her at the inn, and was pleased and surprised when she too passed on a large brown mule, casting on me a side-glance of recognition, and with a look of conscious pleasure on her pretty face, as if she felt the dignity of her elevated position. Again I thought of Edith, and wished she could have seen the funny little thing as she passed on before me, her father kindly walking beside her with his hand on the bridle of the mule.

I must not linger to tell you of the beauties of the road, which at intervals was marked by stone crosses, or paintings representing scenes in the Passion of our Lord, with here and there a small wayside chapel, in which women were sitting, or kneeling at their prayers. We had left Arth at two o'clock, and now the sun was hanging over the western horizon, and we quickened our steps that we might have time to rest at the top, in order more fully to enjoy the sight of his setting glories. About a mile farther on the road turned out of a fine grove, and we saw at some distance the riders clustering together as if in consultation; and when we came up with them, and they drew away to one side, there was the father sitting by the road-side, and on his knee lay little Jeanne, her face full of fright and pain; and one of the little sun-burnt arms hanging helpless and broken at her side. All the glory of the ride was gone now, for the vicious mule had been startled or offended by something on the way, and the poor little Swiss maid was flung on the hard, rocky road, and her arm was broken.

Fortunately we were not far from the highest point, where there is a large building to accommodate visitors, and the first thing to be done was to carry the poor child to it. It seemed to me that it was something more than good luck which favoured us, when it was found that the band of German students had arrived before us, and that one of them was no German student after all, but an English surgeon, well able to set the broken arm. I knew it must be a painful operation, and feeling I could be of no use was about to leave the room, when the poor father very modestly came up to me, and in broken French made the request that I would stay with little Jeanne; and when I heard it was Jeanne's desire, you may be sure I thought no more of the fatigue of the ascent, or of the sunset I had come to see, but soon put off my hat, and took the little suffering child into my arms. I could gather from her father, that in spite of her shyness little Jeanne had made friends with me; and, perhaps, she saw a look of 'mother' in my face—a face well used to look with love and sympathy on little faces like her own. It is very certain that by soothing, and kisses, and little signs, I was able to help her to bear the pain with much patience, and scarce one cry; and after all was over, and she was made as comfortable as might be in her bed for the night, I saw that she understood me when I put my hands together and said 'Our Father' for her

She could not fold her little hands, but I saw that she said her prayers; and I saw, too, that the tear glistened in her dark-brown eyes. She thought of her mother at home, I know; and I, too, thought of her, and for the sake of the unknown mother I sat by the child all night. Next day there were no signs of fever about her. I dressed and fed her, and parted with my little patient; she was gently carried down the mountain side, and I saw her no more.

So, dear children, we meet and pass each other in the journey of life: probably I shall never see her again, but I often think of little Jeanne and her sunny face, and wonder if she remembers, and sometimes thinks of me.

I must not forget to tell you, that though I missed seeing the sun set, I saw him rise in his full glory, shedding a flood of warmth and light over mountain peaks, valleys, and lakes; and after my sleepless night of watching beside the child's couch, that sunrise broughtto my mind the words,—"Heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

SILVIA LEE.

THE MOSSY STONE..

O YOU grey old mossy stone,
Lying on the heath alone!
Are you sad or are you gay
When we children come to play
Here around you, mossy stone,
Lying on the ground alone?

Do you ever feel it dreary?
Aren't you of the silence weary?
Don't you find it a long day
When we children are away,
O you poor old mossy stone,
Lying on the heath alone?

Have you lain a long time there?
Have you ever been elsewhere?
Have you ever had a brother,
Or a sister, or a mother?
Have you always been alone
By yourself, you mossy stone?

Tell me—I should like to learn—
Weren't you glad when first the fern
Grew about your feet and knees—
When first the shadows of the trees
Fell on you, you poor old stone,
And made you feel not quite alone?

Did you always look so old?
Were you always grey and cold?

How many hundred years have rolled,
How many thousands might be told,
Since first upon this hill, alone
You stood out bare, you ancient stone?

Not a word! He will not speak.
I alone the silence break.
Babble on all day may I,
Nothing will he do but lie
Silent, basking in the sun,
Or waiting till the day is done,
Just a grey old mossy stone,
Lying on the heath alone!

But, ah! I see a little shell,
Perhaps a story it can tell,
It was not always on a heath—
It must have lived the waves beneath—
It did not always grow upon
The mossy side of this old stone!

And, now I look again, I see
What even more surprises me:
A shell it is not, but the print
Of one most strange upon the flint.
Then in it must a fish have grown,
And it was older than the stone.
I wish that some one who is wise
Would write about it in *The Prize*.
And tell us how the shell and stone
First came upon this heath alone.

J. E. C. F.

'SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME.'

(St. Luke, xviii. 16).

LET me come to Thee, oh! Saviour,
I am very young and small,
But I long to live and please Thee,
Thou art kind and good to all.

Thou dost love the little children,
If Thou still wert with us here,
In Thy kind arms Thou would'st take me,
Thou would'st bless me, Saviour dear.

Much I wish to praise and serve Thee,
Deeds of love I long to do;
But I am so weak and helpless,
Make me strong, oh! Saviour true.

Strong to serve, and strong to love Thee,
Strong to do Thy blessed will,
That would almost be as joyful,
As on earth to have Thee still.

Oh, Christ, friend of little children,
In their hour of fear and need,
Be Thou now my Guide and Guardian,
And I shall be blest indeed.

I have read of happy children,
Taken in Thine arms and blest;
I have heard of one beloved,
Who did lean upon Thy breast.

If to me the word were spoken,
'Choose thou, what thy lot shall be,'
This, oh! this should be my heart's wish,
I would be embraced by Thee.

Canst Thou then indeed not bless me,
Though on earth Thou art no more?
Yes, for faithful little children,
Joys like these are yet in store.

SCENES IN EARLY LIFE OF DAVID.

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

AS soon as Goliath saw David he went forward to meet him, and, as usual, the armour-bearer carried the shield in front of the giant. The Philistine gazed in wonder and disdain at the fair and ruddy stripling who thus approached him as the champion of Israel. It would seem that, without noticing the sling he saw only the staff in David's other hand, and supposed that this was what the lad intended to fight with. At the thought that any one should dare to meet so well-armed and mighty a foe as himself with no better a weapon than a shepherd's staff, Goliath's anger was greatly aroused. *Am I a dog*, he cried, *that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.* (1 Sam. xvii. 43.) Then he poured insulting threats upon him, saying, *Come to me, and I will give thy flesh to the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.*

David's trust in God was never more beautifully shown than in his answer to this boasting, contemptuous speech; and it must have astonished the on-lookers amongst the Philistines to hear his answer that was so unlike anything they would expect from a lad of his age. David said to the Philistine, *Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a*

shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcases of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands.

There could not possibly have been a greater contrast between two combatants than between David and Goliath that day. Goliath the giant was abusive, boastful, and impious; David the stripling was calm, modest, and godly. Goliath's trust lay in his own mighty strength and in his armour; David's was entirely in the Lord his God. Which of us could for one moment doubt who would be the victor?

On hearing David declare that he should certainly slay him, the giant strode towards him, no doubt carrying his spear couched ready for a fatal thrust. David ran near enough to make his aim more sure, and then he stopped and took from his bag one of the stones, fitted it to the sling, whirled it round his head and slang it at Goliath's forehead, near the eyes, that being the only vital part of his body that was not protected by his armour of brass. The stone was slung so skilfully and with such force, that it passed through the bones of the giant's forehead and sank into his brain.

In a moment, greatly to the terror and dismay of the Philistine army, their champion, being stunned by the stone, *fell upon his face to the earth* without having struck a single blow at the lad whom he had held in so much contempt. David ran swiftly and stood upon his body, and before Goliath had time to recover from the effect of the blow, he drew the giant's huge sword from its sheath and killed him by cutting off his head. To treat a vanquished foe in this manner and then to carry his head in triumph was a common custom in ancient times. Thus one of the very weapons in which Goliath had trusted became in David's hand the means of completing the boaster's destruction.

When the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled. And the men of Israel and of Judah (among whom were probably Saul, Jonathan, and David, as we gather from the next chapter) *arose and shouted, and pursued the Philistines* down the hill-side, and through the valley of Elah, into the corn-fields of Philistia, and up to the very walls of their own strong cities, Ekron and Gath, slaying great numbers, and wounding many more. Thus did God vindicate His own honour and prove to the Philistines that He is *the Lord, the true God, the living God, and an everlasting king.* (Jer. x. 10.)

On returning from the pursuit of their enemies the men of Israel gathered up the arms and other spoil that had been left in the deserted camp, but David, as trophies of his victory, took the head, the armour, and the sword of Goliath. Before he had gone out to meet the Philistine, Saul, who did not remember to have seen him before, had asked Abner, the captain of the host, *Whose son is this youth?* Abner could not tell the king, but now he took the lad to the royal tent to give the answer himself. And Saul said to him, *Whose son art thou, thou young man?* This was a natural question, for in those days, as is still the custom in Arabia, a man was more known by his father's name than by his own. Far from being puffed up by his success, David at once told of his humble birth, saying, *I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite. And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house.* (1 Sam. xviii. 2.)

We may be sure that after the victory David did not forget to thank God and sing His praise. It is thought that the 144th Psalm was written as a thanksgiving for his deliverance from Goliath, and some have supposed that the 9th Psalm was written to commemorate the same event. He hung up the armour in a tent that was allotted to him, but he took Goliath's head to Jerusalem, and sent the sword to the tabernacle at Nob, in the tribe of Benja-

min, where it hung until, when his life was in danger, he took the weapon for his own use. (1 Sam. xxi. 9.)

David fighting with Goliath is a good example for us who are the soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

David fought *bravely*. In our daily warfare we need great courage to help us in fighting against the Goliaths that are within us—the evil thoughts, the sinful passions, the bad habits, and the besetting sins that lurk within our hearts. And we, too, need much courage to withstand calmly and firmly the sneers, and ridicule, and scorn that we meet with in the world around us. A most important rule for the young Christian soldier is this, 'Be always brave enough to bear being laughed at when you know you are acting in obedience to God's commands.'

Also, David fought *watchfully*, aiming so exactly at the right moment, so steadily and surely that just one pebble from his sling felled Goliath to the earth. Our courage too, must thus have keen eyes to see the movements of our spiritual enemies as well as strong arms to strike at them. Without watchfulness, courage will often lead us into temptations which we have not strength enough to resist.

Moreover, David fought with *firm trust in God, and therefore with distrust of self*. Instead of recounting to Goliath the brave deed of slaying the lion and the bear, he told him about the power of Him for Whose honour he was going to fight; and the nearer view of the giant's terrible weapons only made him exclaim the more confidently, *I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts!* Let us, by God's grace, set ourselves thus to *fight the good fight of faith*, and, in so doing, *lay hold on eternal life*. (2 Tim. vi. 12.) Then we shall be *more than conquerors through Him that loved us* (Rom. viii. 37), even Jesus, *the captain of our salvation*. (Heb. ii. 10.)

'Onward, Christians, onward go,
Join the war and face the foe;
Will ye flee in danger's hour?
Know ye not your Captain's power?

'Let your drooping hearts be glad;
March, in heavenly armour clad;
Fight, nor think the battle long;
Soon shall victory tune your song.

'Onward, then, in battle move;
More than conquerors ye shall prove;
Though opposed by many a foe,
Christian soldier, onward go.'

REAL OFFERINGS.

'Neither will I offer burnt-offerings unto the Lord of that which doth cost me nothing.' (2 Samuel xxiv. 24, 1 Chronicles xxi. 24.)

LORD, not with poor and paltry gifts,
And costless offerings,
Approach we to Thy Throne of Grace,
Thou King of kings.

Thy Salem saw the Patriarch come
An only son to slay,
O make us on Thine altar, Lord,
Our Isaac lay.

There David said, 'I serve not God
With that which cost me nought;'
So may our best by us to Thee,
O Lord, be brought.

Salem beheld Thy temple rise
In state magnifical;
May we be temples, Lord, to Thee,
Who givest all.

There God the Father gave the Son,
The Son His life did give,
That we by His most precious death
Might ever live.

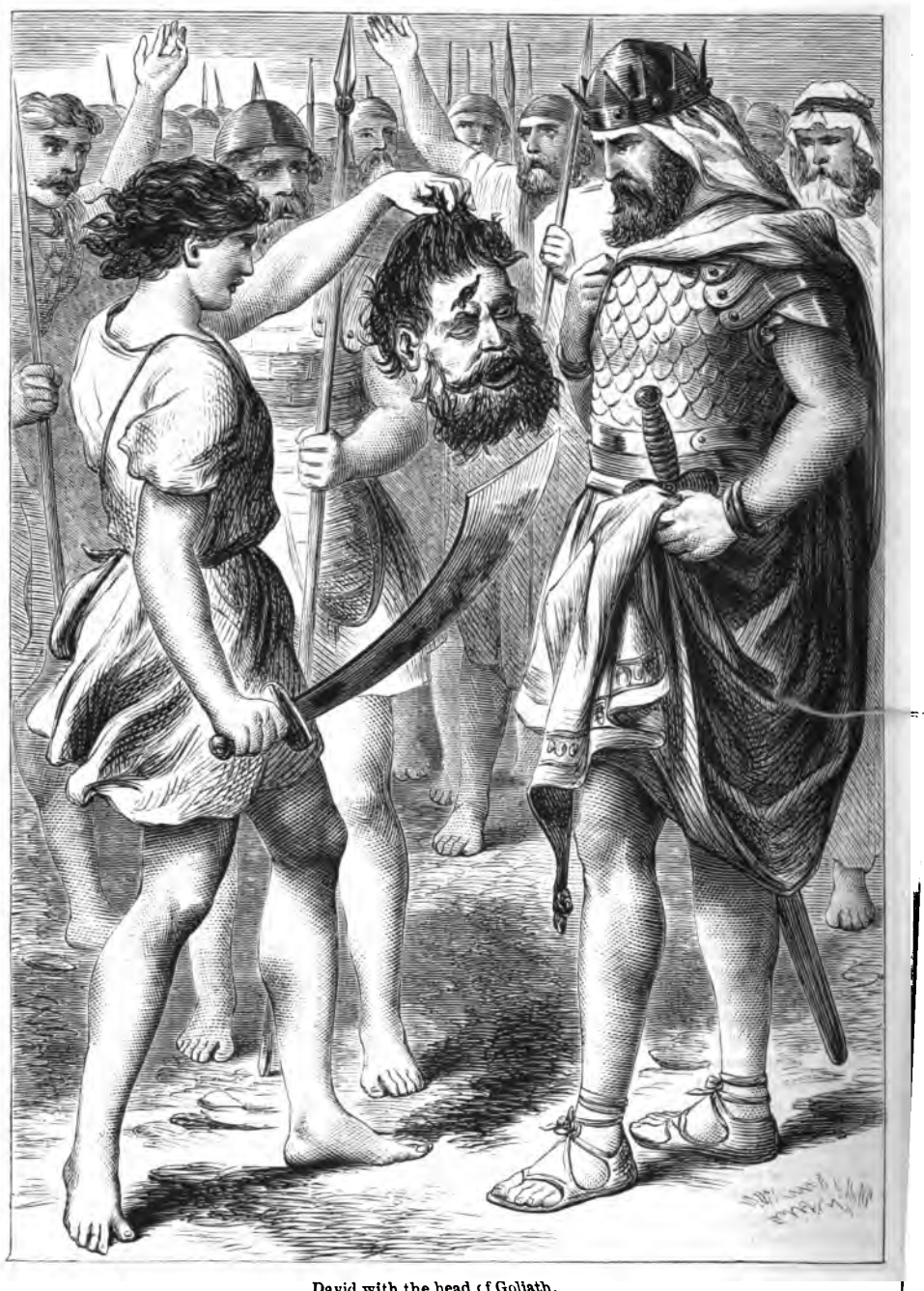
O spare not silver, grudge not gold,
That perishable pelf,
But freely give to Him, who gave
For you Himself.

Salem beheld the Holy Ghost
Come down in golden shower;
What gifts can we present to Him
For that blest dower?

Bring Mary's ointment, widow's mites,
Into God's treasury cast,
And never with a Judas say,
'Wherefore this waste?'

So may we like true Israelites
To our own Salem come.
And treasure, house, and Father have
In heaven our home.

THE HOLY YEAR.



David with the head of Goliath.

The Widow's Offering.

Page 135.

A REAL VICTORY.

'MOTHER,' said little Ellen Layton, after gazing thoughtfully out of the window for some time one afternoon, 'I have been thinking about something I heard you read to Cousin Alice this morning—"The perfect victory is, that we triumph over ourselves;" and I cannot make out what it means.'

'It means, my dear, that we gain the greatest of victories when we overcome our own faults; but, if you like to bring your work and sit down quietly, I will tell you a little tale which will perhaps help you to understand it better.'

Ellen was charmed with the promise of hearing a tale, and she ran off at once to get the work, though to tell the truth she was not usually fond of sitting quietly with her needle.

'When I was a little girl,' said Mrs. Layton, 'I had a friend whom I loved very much. She was kind-hearted and always ready to oblige, but one great fault spoiled her, and that was a want of perseverance. In work, in play, in the many kind things she did for other people, she never had patience to continue long with anything she began.

'Near her home there lived a poor cripple, who was often obliged to keep in bed for months together. Her parents and brothers (she had no sister) were ignorant people, who could neither read nor write, and they used sometimes to seem almost tired of waiting upon her.

'As she lay in bed the time often appeared very long, for she was as ignorant as the rest of the family, and knew little of the good news the Bible brings us, so she could not even comfort herself by thinking that the Saviour is always with His children, and loves and pities those who suffer.

'My friend Kate once went with her mother to see poor Fanny Stokes, and was so grieved to hear of her long, dull days that she asked if she might go on Saturday afternoons to read to her, and perhaps teach her to read for herself.

'Fanny was pleased to think of such a treat as a bright little girl coming to read to her, and Kate's mother felt glad that her child was willing to give up her half holiday for the sake of comforting a suffering neighbour.

'On their way home, she told Kate that in this she must try to persevere, for it would indeed be cruel if she disappointed such a poor helpless creature. Kate was shocked at the thought of doing so, and said she could never grow tired of such work as this, she should feel herself really doing good, and was certain that that would prevent her from giving it up. Mrs. Smith did not feel so sure about it, but was anxious for Kate to try, though she would have been glad to see a more humble spirit in the heart of her little girl.

'For several Saturdays Kate resisted all temptation to give up her visits to poor Fanny, and said she found more pleasure in reading and talking to her than she should in anything else.

'It must indeed have been delightful to see how eagerly Fanny Stokes listened to the chapters which Kate read her. It was all so new and fresh. When she heard how Jesus healed sick people like herself, and how kind and loving His words were to the sick and sorrowful, it seemed to her as if she would never again feel dull and friendless. She learned several texts, but the one she liked best was that one which says, "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you."

'It was a great thing to her to feel that she might ask God for anything she wanted, and she had much to ask Him for.

'Fanny also began learning to read, and though rather slow, she tried so hard to remember what Ellen told her, that she could soon spell some little words. She was very anxious to be able to read the good Book for herself, and when alone she would try and make out the words in a book that Kate left her, so that she got on faster than any one could have expected.

'When the bright spring afternoons came, Kate could not always resist going for a walk with her schoolfellows before she went to see Fanny, and then there was often little time left for reading, as Fanny liked having her lesson first, because she

longed so much to be able to read for herself every day about her good Friend in heaven.

'Gradually Kate found her visits less interesting than at first, and began to think her pupil slow and stupid. So she sometimes missed going, and when August came she had not entered the house for three weeks.

'Just then Mrs. Smith, who had been very ill, was ordered to go to the sea-side, and decided to take Kate with her. Kate was not able to bid poor Fanny good-bye, and she felt sorry that she had been so long without seeing her; however, she made up her mind to begin afresh when she returned home, and let nothing prevent her from going every week.

'The first Saturday, however, that Kate was at home again, some friends came to see her, and she could not resist the temptation of staying to tell them all about her visit. As she had been away from home so long, she thought it was quite allowable, and next Saturday would do very well to begin going regularly to see Fanny Stokes.

'Next Saturday came, and feeling quite resolved not to delay any longer, Ellen took a book which she had lately had given her, and set off to the cottage.

'Going into Fanny's room she heard voices, and hesitated a few seconds at the door, not liking to intrude.

'The sick girl was just saying, "Thank you, Nannie, you are very kind, but I am too tired now to try and read myself. If Miss Kate had not got weary of coming, I should very likely have been able to read pretty well by now, but I know I was very slow at learning, and now I am so weak, that looking at the letters makes my head ache."

'"I know it is trying to understand me that tires you, Fanny," answered a child's voice. "I wish I knew all the words, without having to spell them."

'When poor Kate heard this she felt ashamed and grieved. In an instant she saw how it was, and knew that her old faults had once more gained the mastery over her, and led her to disappoint the poor cripple whom she had promised to comfort and teach.

'She could not go into the room just then, but quietly she crept downstairs and returned home. Nothing had ever humbled her so much before. All day on Sunday the remembrance of her fault tormented her, everything recalled to mind this miserable failure.

'When in the evening service she heard the text, "Without me ye can do nothing," and the clergyman spoke of our own weakness, and of the help which Jesus sends if we only ask for it, she first saw clearly what was the reason she so constantly failed in conquering her great fault; she had trusted in her own strength instead of seeking help from above, therefore the enemy was too powerful for her. Next day she told her mother the whole story, and on Wednesday afternoon they went to see Fanny together.

'They stayed a long time, and Fanny told them how weary the weeks had seemed without the visits she had grown accustomed to. She said that one day little Nannie had found her crying from disappointment, and had tried to read to her as well as she could, though Fanny said, "It was not much I could understand, for she had to spell all but quite the little words, and the long ones she had to miss altogether." From this time Kate never ceased visiting Fanny, and was able to comfort and cheer her much during the dull winter days.

'All this time Fanny's weakness gradually increased, and the next spring the loving Saviour took her from her poverty and sufferings here to His happy home in heaven. Kate missed her much, but thanked God for having given her an opportunity of making up for past neglect, by doing all she could for Fanny's comfort during the rest of her life. In everything else she tried earnestly to overcome her fault, and seeking help from above she was in time enabled to do it.'

'Ah, mother,' said little Ellen, 'that must have been a great victory, it seems so difficult always to persevere.'

'Yes, dear; you may be sure it is very hard work when we fight against our own faults, but you know we have a good leader in the battle, even Jesus the Captain of our salvation. He is sure always to guide

Reading to Sick Child.

us aright if we seek His help. We must watch what enemies we most easily yield to, and must ask Him every day to be with us, and grant us strength that we may have the victory, and be His faithful soldiers and servants to our life's end.

THE LARK AND THE ROOK.

'GOOD-night, Sir Rook,' said a little Lark,
'The daylight fades, it will soon be dark;
I've bathed my wing in the sun's last ray,
I've sung my hymn to the dying day:
So now I haste to my quiet nook
In yon dewy meadow—good-night, Sir Rook.'

'Good-night, poor Lark,' said his titled friend,
With a haughty toss and a distant bend;
'I also go to my rest profound,
But not to sleep on the cold damp ground:
The fittest place for a bird like me
Is the topmost bough of yon tall pine-tree.

'I opened my eyes at peep of day,
And saw you taking your upward way,
Dreaming your fond romantic dreams—
An ugly speck in the sun's bright beams,
Soaring too high to be seen or heard,
And said to myself, "What a foolish bird!"

'I trod the park with a princely air;
I filled my crop with the richest fare;
I cawed all day 'mid a lordly crew,
And I made more noise in the world than you.
The sun shone forth on my ebon wing;
I looked and wondered—good-night, poor thing!'

'Good-night, once more,' said the Lark's sweet voice;
'I see no cause to repent my choice:
You build your nest in the lofty pine,
But is your slumber more soft than mine?
You make more noise in the world than I,
But whose is the sweetest minstrelsy?'

Children's Hymns and Rhymes.

'LET ME DO AS I LIKE.'

(*Continued from page* 115.)

'THIS is jolly,' said Tom, as the boat went gliding out on the swell of the waves. 'Perhaps he's going to fish!' he added, in a whisper.

'I don't see any lines,' replied Charlie; 'but I wish he would. Fancy if we caught a whale! I say, wouldn't the chaps at school stare when we got back and told them?'

But there was to be no fishing, and neither Charlie nor Tom had the chance of catching a whale, much as they would have liked it. They saw lots of fish though, fish of all sizes swimming about in the sea close to the boat, and sometimes poking their long noses quite into the boys' hands as they leant over the gunwale, and dabbled them in the waves.

'They're not a bit afraid,' exclaimed Charlie.

'Why should they be afraid?' asked the rower; and the boys jumped, for they had not heard him speak before, and his voice was very deep and sweet.

'I don't know, sir,' stammered Tom, half inclined to be afraid himself.

'Mightn't we catch them, perhaps?' suggested Charlie. 'I've caught fish at home, and they didn't like it.'

'You could not catch these,' said the boatman.

'Why not?' asked the boys; 'they come quite close; look, I can catch this one!'

And Tom bent down and almost closed his fingers over a bright little fish, whose scales shone like gold. But all at once he drew back his hand with a cry, the water seemed to have burned him, though it was cool enough a minute before.

'No, you cannot catch them. Their Master keeps them safe.'

'Have they a master? what, those fish!'

'Yes,' replied the rower.

'Who is he?' exclaimed the boys.

'One whose service is perfect freedom,' answered the rower, and bent again to his oars, so that the boat flew over the water, while the boys wondered what he meant, but were afraid to ask.

They went so fast that they soon began to see an island rising before them. 'Oh!' said Charlie, drawing a long breath as they came in sight of a great mountain, whose top was covered with shining snow, and seemed lost in the clouds; while down its sides bright dancing waterfalls sparkled and jumped among the green trees that grew close down to the water's edge. Presently the boat shot up on the beach, and the rower laid down his oars.

'You wish to do as you like,' he said, looking straight at the two boys, who opened their eyes, even their mouths, with surprise, that he should know what they wished when they had never said a word about it in his presence. 'You want to do as you like, so I have brought you to the land of liberty, where everybody can do as he pleases. Choose your own ways, go.'

He waited while they got out of the boat, and then rowed quickly away and left them.

'We needn't be afraid of being ordered about now, Tom. Let's go on, and see what the place is like. Hullo! here's a squirrel; there he goes, up that tree, and here's another, with ever such a tail. Catch him, Tom, he's close to you;' and Tom dashed round a great tree after the bright-eyed little squirrel, who only waved its tail in his face, and never offered to run away.

Tom put out his hand and stroked him, laughing with delight, 'Why he's tame!' and all at once, 'Whiz,' down came another to see what the first one was about, and brushed his tail against Charlie's face.

'Let's take them home,' he cried; 'I'll tie them up in my handkerchief, and they can lie in my jacket-pocket. Won't it be fun to have them in a cage?'

But it was of no use; just as he touched the squirrel, a branch of the tree hit him such a rap on the knuckles that he almost thought it was his schoolmaster caning him, because he could not do his lessons.

'Oh, I say!' cried Charlie, 'that hurts.'

'It's like the fish,' said Tom; 'perhaps we'd better not try to catch them, their Master doesn't like it; the man in the boat said something about freedom, don't you remember, and it's not freedom to be caught and shut up in a cage.'

'Well then, come on, it's no good stopping here,' answered Charlie rather sulkily, for he didn't like to have his knuckles rapped so hard; 'If we're not to touch them, it's no good stopping.'

'But we may stroke them, only see,' said Tom, for the feathery tail of the squirrel brushed close to him, and he stroked its soft back with a gentle hand.

'Come on,' said Charlie, gruffly, and Tom followed him, but not before he had kissed the squirrel's soft fur, as if to say, 'good-bye.'

Charlie soon recovered his temper: in fact, it was not in any boy's nature to go through that wood and be cross. Rabbits, weasels, stoats, foxes, hedgehogs, ran across their path at every step. One old fox sat and scratched his ear with his foot while he watched them, and a rabbit got behind him and played 'bo-peep' with the boys from behind his back. It was altogether the most wonderful wood they ever were in. None of the animals seemed afraid of them or of each other, the birds hopped about at their feet, and lighted on their shoulders. Tom and Charlie were delighted, and only that they began to feel hungry, I think they would have stayed in the wood till now.

But, as I said, they were getting hungry, and so they agreed to push on, in the hope of finding something good to eat. Nor were they disappointed: just outside the wood, there lay a beautiful garden, with such fruit in it! Tom and Charlie felt their mouths water, as they looked at the grapes and peaches.

'I wish we might have some,' Tom said longingly, as they looked over the garden-gate.

'Come in,' said a voice close to them; 'this is the Master's garden, and He gives freely to all who need.'

The gate opened, and a child led them into the beautiful garden, and told them to eat what they liked.

They did not wait to be told twice. Tom plucked a beautiful bunch of purple grapes which hung low from the wall, and Charlie never went beyond the peach-tree that stood just in front of him.

'I say, Tom,' he said after a pause of busy eating; 'fancy having as many peaches as ever one likes, it's prime!'

Tom nodded from over his bunch of grapes.

'Something like having our own way this; we should never have got such a lot at home.'

'Are you not afraid of people stealing things?' said Charlie, suddenly turning to the child-keeper of the beautiful garden.

'No,' replied the child, smiling.

'Nor of stopping here alone. Why, any fellow could climb the gate and take just whatever he liked.'

'The Master gives to all who need,' replied the child, repeating her first words of greeting.

'Yes, but they might hurt things, and knock about the trees, and spoil the garden.'

'No, they could not do that; the Master takes care of his own.'

'And who are you?' said Tom, who, having eaten as many grapes as he could, began to listen to the conversation; 'Does He take care of you?'

'Always,' said the child; 'I am in His service, so I am quite safe. I have nothing to be afraid of, because you see He always takes care of His own.'

(Concluded in our next.)

THE HEN AND CHICKENS.

OH MOTHER, I've just come in from the barn,
And I've seen the sweetest sight:
Ten little chickens, just out of the shell,
Like balls of down so white.

And the tiniest wings, that flutter so
When I take them up in my hand;
And eyes as bright as the baby's are,
And heads bobbing round as they stand.

But the old mother hen's not a bit like you;
A fidgetty, cross old thing,
She clucks, and flutters, and scolds away,
When meal to the coop I bring.

I went to the garden and dug some worms,
Just to see if they liked such food;
And they stared, and wondered, and snapped them up,
And seemed to say they were good.

Hen and Chickens, by F. W. KEYL.

And two little feathery, downy things
  Tugged away at one worm so long,
Pulling here and there, till it snapped in two;
  And the hen never told them 'twas wrong.
I told them 'twas selfish, and not polite
  To treat one another so:
That you taught *your* little ones to do right,
  And be happy that way, you know.
For beauty is useless to children or chicks
  If they 're wilful and selfish and bad;
I hope they'll be good, as we try to be—
  Then, like you, the old hen will be glad.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. X.] OCTOBER, 1869. [One Penny

Foal, from Life by F. W. Keyl.

FOAL.

IF boys require to be put early on a pony to become good horsemen, a foal should be *properly* handled very early to save much *breaking* hereafter.

Breaking means to destroy, and what is broken in this case is the will of the horse. But many a splendid animal is injured or even killed by cruel, unwise treatment, which breaks the body, but not the will. A foal that has been petted, pampered, and played with, is more difficult to teach than one which grows up half wild in a meadow. It would lead into a long yarn were we to enter into the reasons why it is so. Instead of that, I will tell you what I heard of a very clever man, who was in the service of the late Marquis of B. When a foal was about a year old, having already been used to its feeder who could touch and handle it, he would get a halter put on, and a long rein, and then send a Highlander (for all this was done in Scotland) out to walk about and sit about, and smoke his pipe, with the foal following him, or standing by his side. Horses like tobacco-smoke—the Arabs blow it in their nostrils, and thereby calm an infuriated horse at any time. After a few weeks of this it was turned out again at large. Next year came the same amusement, and a little lounging—*i.e.*, letting it trot round and round, at the end of a long rein or cord. The third year a boy was put on, and each time the period of taking it up for lessons was lengthened for a few weeks. The fourth year it was properly taught, and came into hard work when five years old. He never failed, and his horses lasted many years in vigour and endurance.

'LET ME DO AS I LIKE.'

(*Concluded from page* 143.)

'DOES He mind about squirrels, do you think?' asked Charlie.

'He minds about everything,' said the child gravely.

'About me and Tom, do you think?' continued the boy; 'would He mind about us?'

'He does.'

'But then you see we're not like you, we are strangers; we don't know the ways of this place.'

'Never mind, go and see for yourselves;' and the child led them to the gate.

'Good-bye, thank you,' said Tom, holding out his hand.

But the child stooped forward, and kissed them both.

'The Master does so.'

And though the boys were rather shy, I don't think they minded it.

CHAPTER II.

'WHICH way shall we go?' said Charlie, for two or three roads crossed each other just outside the gate.

'Straight on,' replied Tom, and the boys both set off running just as they had done when they started from home. But they did not go far; they soon came to a large broad meadow, with groups of trees growing here and there, and a shallow wide stream running through the midst. The meadow looked a capital place to play in, or to rest in, and the boys were not surprised to see numbers of other boys and girls scattered about; some playing, some resting, some very busy.

'Let's go in,' said Tom; so they went through the gate, and soon found themselves near a group of boys.

'Why, Charlie, they're doing lessons!' exclaimed Tom in amazement, as he drew near enough to see the books and slates, so like the books and slates they used at home, that Charlie thought he could see his own Latin Grammar with a great splash of ink on the first page.

'I thought everybody did as they liked here,' said Charlie, dolefully; 'and yet they are learning lessons!'

'Perhaps they can't help it, after all,' suggested Tom; 'we will ask them,' and he sat down near one of the boys, who nodded to him and smiled.

'Who sets you lessons?' inquired Tom.

'No one.'

'Then why do you do them?'

'The Master wishes it.'

'Don't you hate them? Charlie and I do; and Latin Grammar worst of all! Why need you bother with it here?'

'Yes,' struck in Charlie, 'I thought the good of this place was, that everybody could do as they liked!'

'So they can; how long have you been here?'

'Oh, not long, we've just come from such a jolly garden.'

'And did you pass the wood?'

'Didn't we just!' cried Tom; 'and weren't there things in it! squirrels and rabbits, and all sorts. They cut about and weren't a bit afraid.'

'No, the Master takes care of them, and of us.'

'But about the Latin!' said Charlie.

'Well, it's just this,' said their new friend. 'Everybody who comes here can do as they like. They may wander about, and please themselves, and play all day, or else they may take service with the Master, but then they have to do as He tells them.'

'Then they can't do as they like.'

'Yes, for His service is perfect freedom,' the words seemed familiar, and Tom stopped a minute to try and recollect where he had heard them before, but he couldn't remember, so he went on talking.

'What made you become His servant?'

'Oh, it was such a bother to have no one to mind. All of us wanted to do different things, and please ourselves, and then we got cross with each other.' (Tom remembered that he had not wanted to leave the squirrel, and had not liked Charlie's being in such a hurry to get away from it.)

'Yes, I can understand that,' he said, thoughtfully.

'Well, we soon found that, having our own way was no fun at all; some of us got fighting, and then we were hurt. I think we should have hated each other if we'd gone on much longer, though we were very good friends when we had some one over us; besides, we got into all sorts of accidents, and one fellow was nearly drowned in the stream. I had an awful knock on the head from a stone; I was giddy and sick for nearly a week, and there wasn't much fun in that, was there?'

'No, but that might happen now; mightn't it?' said Charlie.

'No, the Master takes care of His own.'

'Why, that's just what the child in the garden said!' exclaimed the boys in a breath; 'everybody seems to say that here.'

'Because it is what happens. Did you ever try to hurt any of the Master's things, or to catch the creatures in the wood?'

'Yes,' said Tom, blushing; 'I tried to catch a fish, and got my fingers burnt, and Charlie wanted to take home a squirrel, and got his hands rapped ever so.'

'And if you tried to hurt me it would be the same. Whenever anybody takes service with the Master, He watches over them and keeps them from harm, so that all His servants are safe.'

'That's something,' said Charlie thoughtfully; 'but then you have to give up doing as you like, and I hate being ordered about, and told to do this, and fetch that, all just to plague one, and not because it's any good.'

'The Master never does that!' said his new friend, looking up with astonishment into Charlie's face.

'Doesn't He, really, though?'

'No, never; we often have to do things we do not quite like, and to work hard when we would rather play, but then we know that the Master only tells us to do what is best for us, and that He knows what is right, much better than we do. Then, too, we are very fond of our Master, and that makes it easier to do what He tells us. He never makes us uncomfortable if He can help it; He wants us all to be just as happy and jolly as the squirrels you saw in the wood, and I've heard some one say, that after a long while we may be so; the freedom will be perfect then, our will one with the Master's will, which shall be done on earth as it is in heaven.'

But as the words were spoken, the field and the children, and the running stream, grew misty and indistinct, and danced up into the clouds; and Charlie awoke with a start, and found his mother kneeling by his bed saying, 'Our Father,' in a low voice; she had seen that Charlie was cross when he went to bed, and when she came to kiss him she had thought, 'Perhaps my

dear little boy did not say his prayers before he went to bed;' and so she had knelt down to say them for him, and to ask God to take care of him through the night, though he would not ask it for himself. But he was not cross any longer now; he put his arms round her neck and kissed her, as she laid her head down by his on the pillow.

'Mamma, does God ever tell people things in dreams now, like He used to in the Bible?'

'Why, dear Charlie?'

'Because I think God sent me a dream just now,' (and then he told her what I have just told you;) 'don't you think God sent it, mamma?'

'Yes, darling; for I know God sends all good things, and He sent you this to help you to be good, and to understand His love and care for you better than you did before.'

'And I'll try not to want my own way again, but to do as you tell me;' whispered Charlie, as he crept closer into the loving arms that circled him.

And so he made his choice, and entered willingly on that 'Service which is perfect freedom.'

TELL ME OF HIM.

TELL me that tale again,
Tell it me ever;
Say me that tale again,
Cease from it never.

Make me still cling to it,
Make me hold fast,
All my heart bring to it
On to the last.

Fainting—backsliding—
Advance do I never—
Now life's from me gliding,
And on comes—For-ever!

Failing my heart is,
My faith growing dim,
But say me those words of His—
Tell me of Him.

Make me still cling to Him,
Make me hold fast,
All my heart bring to Him
On to the last.

J. E. C. F.

WILLIE AND MARY; OR, A GRANDFATHER'S STORY.

THE snow lay thick upon the ground, and the wind moaned piteously as it swayed the branches of the tall trees which grew in the lonely plantation by the side of old Davy's cottage. As Elsie, old Davy's little grandchild, listened, she laid down her work, and drew closer to the bright cheery fire, exclaiming as she did so, 'Oh! grandfather, doesn't the wind sound mournful? It make methink of the sea, where poor daddy is now; and sometimes, when I listen to the rattling it makes against the door, I start and think it must be father come home at last.'

Old Davy had been reading his Bible; but, on hearing the voice of his little favourite, he laid down the book, and, tenderly stroking the child's hair, said, in his usual kind manner, 'My little girl is weary to-night? Put your work away for the present, and listen, for I'm going to tell you a story. It is a true story, Elsie—quite true—but I don't know exactly what name to give it.'

'Never mind, grandfather, said Elsie, 'let's call it the story without a name; it doesn't signify as long as *you* tell it.'

'Well, then,' began the old man, 'once upon a time there lived in a cottage by the sea an old woman, named Hester, with her two grandchildren—a boy and girl. At the time my story begins the boy, whom I shall call Willie, was about twelve years old; and his sister, Mary, about fourteen. Neither of the children could remember much about their father and mother; for their mother died when Willie was two years old, and their father, who was a fisherman, had been drowned at sea about the same time. But their good old grandmother loved her two poor orphan children, with all the love of her kindly heart; she worked for them day and night, and, though she was getting old and weak, she

Old Davy and his Grandchild.

spared no pains or trouble to keep them neat and tidy; and, up to the time my story begins, she had sent them both for several years to a good school in the village, where they had been taught everything that would fit them to earn an honest livelihood. But now Hester thought they were getting old enough to do something for themselves; she therefore made it known to her friends that she wished to

hear of some employment for her grandchildren. They had not long to wait, for the Rector's wife called one day and offered to take Willie as page-boy; and, not long after, Mrs. Rich, the Squire's lady, engaged Mary as under-nurse to her three little children.

'One would think that Willie and Mary would now have been glad to work and earn money for their poor old grandmother. But you will hear how it happened. For some time they were both very happy, and seemed likely to stay where they were for several years. But, before many months were passed, Willie complained that he had so much to do, that there was not one of the servants at the Rectory he liked, and that they all put on him as if he were a slave. At length he told his grandmother that he never should be happy unless he went to sea. 'And then,' added he, 'I shall have more liberty, and be able to see a little what the world is like.'

'Poor old Hester! she had hoped so much from her handsome, merry boy, and now would he leave her without a pang or sign of sorrow? "But," said she to herself, as she sat alone in the evening, after one of Willie's visits, "it is the Lord's will; let Him do what seemeth Him best." And then she thought again, "Perchance, if the poor boy were to go but one voyage, it would sicken him of a sea life, and I might live to set eyes on him once before I die."

'She little thought that even then, as she sat alone by her quiet fireside, her ungrateful grandson had determined to run away from service, and join a young sailor, who, he knew, hated Hester, because she had once spoken to him upon the sin of drinking and swearing. But, as weeks and months rolled away, and nothing was heard of the run-away boy, everybody concluded that he must have gone to sea. And so time sped on; and old Hester grew daily weaker and weaker.

'Mary often went to see her grandmother; and, although she was a kind-hearted girl in some respects, I am sorry to say she was very thoughtless in others. I will tell you one thing she did. It was near Christmas time, and old Hester was greatly in need of a warm cloak for Sunday wear. Mary knew this, and therefore determined that she would save her money to buy one for her grandmother as a Christmas present. But about this time it happened that she was sent by her mistress to the nearest town to do a little shopping. In one of the shop-windows she saw a very pretty muslin. As the giddy girl stood gazing at it, she admired it more and more, and thought, in her foolish little head, how smart she should look in it. She went into the shop and inquired the price. The shopman said it was ten shillings the dress; and a cheaper and better material she couldn't get anywhere for the money. Mary thought of her grandmother, but a moment after she said to herself, 'Oh, she can wait another year. At any rate, I *must* have this. It 's so lovely, and so cheap.' Accordingly, she asked the shopman to cut her off enough for a dress, and to bring her the necessary materials for making it up, so that it should look pretty.

(Concluded in our next.)

SCENES IN EARLY LIFE OF DAVID.

JONATHAN AND DAVID.

WHILE David was in the king's tent after the defeat of the Philistines, there stood there also Saul's son, Jonathan, whose character is one of the most beautiful in all the Bible history. We know that the hearts of all are in the hands of God, and it pleased Him to raise up for David a true and powerful friend in the person of this prince, the godly son of an ungodly father. *And it came to pass, that when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.* (1 Sam. xviii. 1.)

No doubt Jonathan had watched the combat with Goliath, and had felt great admiration at the courage shown by David. In Saul's tent he saw the lad's beautiful

countenance beaming with kindness and good-will; and he heard David's modest answer concerning his father, Jesse the Bethlehemite. But it must have been more than this that gained for David the love of so true and constant a heart as Jonathan's. No doubt he loved David for having saved Saul and his country from the disgrace of being conquered by the Philistines. But we think that, above all, Jonathan must at once have felt sure that David was the man whom Samuel meant when he said to Saul, *The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou.* (1 Sam. xv. 28.)

'But,' we might ask, 'was not this rather a reason why Jonathan would be envious of David? Would he not feel inclined to treat him with coldness, if not with actual dislike?' Before the death of Goliath, Jonathan had been the favourite hero of his father's subjects, especially since the deliverance which his noble faith and astonishing courage had won for Israel during an invasion by the Philistines, when with only his armour-bearer by his side, he had attacked a whole garrison of the enemy, and God had so blessed him in his brave attempt that men had said of him, *He hath wrought with God this day.* (1 Sam. xiv. 45.) But now he must see his place in the people's affections filled by another, and he must be prepared one day to see the throne occupied by this same son of Jesse. And yet, notwithstanding all this, *Jonathan loved David as his own soul.*

The secret of this was that Jonathan knew it to be God's will that David should become a hero and a king, and, knowing this, he desired that, no matter at what cost to himself, God's holy will should be fully done. So instead of seeing in David a rival who was to set him aside from the throne, he looked upon him as the deliverer of Israel, and the chosen servant of the God whom Jonathan himself loved and served so well. Rightly has it been said of him that 'if he had wrought with God by slaying God's foes, surely he still more signally wrought with God by loving God's friends.'

Such love as marked Jonathan's friendship for David is one of the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. v. 22), and can be possessed only by those who are sanctified by Him. *Then Jonathan and David made a covenant* (a solemn agreement of friendship) *because he loved him as his own soul.* In those days if the king or a prince thought proper to give any one the garment which he had previously worn, it was looked upon as a great honour, and the custom is still followed in Eastern lands. So now, in order that all might know of his friendship for David, *Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him and gave it to David,* and still further to mark his favour, he gave him his coat and his sword, his bow and his girdle, the gift of a girdle being then deemed a token of the greatest confidence and love.

The covenant which they made was most faithfully kept until Jonathan's death in the battle of Mount Gilboa, when David lamented the loss of his friend in these touching and beautiful words: *I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.* (2 Sam. i. 26.)

Happy are they who are blessed with a true and real friend, for this increases the brightness of life's bright days, and cheers the gloom of its darker hours. Happy, especially, are the young when they gain such a friend and keep him as a friend through life, for there are few friendships so warm and sincere as those which are formed in early years.

And surely the story of Jonathan's self-sacrificing love cannot but remind us of One whose love for us is wonderful, passing the love of Jonathan,—the love of the Lord Jesus, *who loved us and gave Himself for us,* who clothes us in the robe of His own most perfect righteousness, who gives us the sword of the Spirit, and the shield of faith, and the girdle of truth. His own words to His disciples are these: *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.* (John, xv. 13, 14.)

Jonathan and David.

Autumn.

GLEANING IN AUTUMN.

HOW glorious the fields are when they are waving with the golden corn! when the rustling ears on every hill-side seem to breathe out the anthem, 'Thou, O God, hast prepared of Thy goodness for the poor.' Psalm lxviii. 10.

And when the harvest has fallen before the sturdy strokes of the reapers, and

> 'The banded sheaves stand orderly
> Against the purple autumn sky
> Like armies of prosperity,'

how pleasant it is to see the gleaners come into the fields—mother and merry children together—one by one they pick up the stray ears, then, when they have got a number, they twist the stems together and leave them at the corner of the field till the evening comes, and then they gather them all together and carry them home upon their heads, weary but rejoicing.

And when the harvest is over, what a beating out of grain there is on the cottage floor, and what a goodly sack there is put in the corner; and from it the mother makes cakes and puddings to help out the meals of the early winter time—cakes and puddings which the children find all the sweeter because their fingers gleaned the grain that makes them.

Gleaning has been the right of the poor ever since the old days of Israel. Ruth, the faithful daughter of Naomi, gleaned in the fields of Boaz. When God gave His law to Moses, He took care of the gleaners, He said, 'When ye reap the harvest of your land thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the Lord your God.' Lev. xxiii. 22.

Gleaners go over a field just to take care 'that nothing be lost.' They do what our Lord told His disciples to do after He had fed the five thousand with five barley loaves and two small fishes, for He said, 'Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.'

'Waste not, want not,' is a good and true proverb. It is very bad to see pieces of bread or scraps of food lying on the floor or thrown into the pig-tubs, when there are so many poor children who would be thankful for them. Whether you have much or little, never be ashamed of gleaning together all odds and ends, so that nothing may be lost. I have read of a little girl whose mother was sick, and when the selfish father would not spare her any money from his drink to buy oranges, what did she do? She went and gleaned all the bits of iron she could find, and a shoe that seemed to have fallen off some horse's hoof on purpose for her, and then she ran and sold these for twopence, and bought her sick mother a beautiful orange.

And glean moments of time. This is a kind of gleaning that very many neglect. If 'time is money,' they must have very full pockets that they can afford to lose so much. If they are going on an errand they take twice as much time as they require. They first look in on a neighbour as they pass, then they flatten their nose against the glass of a shop-window for several minutes; then they stop to listen to a barrel-organ, which seems to have caught a bad cold with standing in so many draughts; then they have a gossip with another friend; and between these amusements they walk so slowly that it makes one quite drowsy to look at them, so that when the errand is done at last, it has taken the time that would have been enough for six. This is one way in which many people waste time. If you are wasting time begin at once to glean up the precious moments that none be lost.

Glean, too, little deeds of love and kindness. There are men who seem to reap whole harvests of good with their own sickle, to store them up for the benefit of their fellow-men. We cannot do that, we can only glean a few scattered ears in the same field—we can only try and do a little good here and there. But let us be sure that we do all that we can.

And one thing we must do if we would succeed; we must stoop. A gleaner on stilts would come home empty-handed; and if we would glean any acts of love, we must not be proud. Those who are thinking a great deal of themselves never can be useful.

A half-drunken workman the other day was trying to persuade a companion to go into a public-house with him. 'Come in and stand treat,' he said; and the other, a soft, good-natured man, was just going in, when a little girl, the child of rich parents, who was passing with a servant, darted forward, and, laying hold of the man who was being enticed, said to him beseechingly, 'Please, don't go in, don't! Oh! don't go in; please, don't!'

Both men looked at the little girl in wonder; the drunkard let go his comrade's arm and staggered away without saying another word. You may be sure that child was not thinking of her silk dress, nor of her clean gloves, nor of herself at all, when she did that act of real love and kindness.

It was only a little act. I don't know that any good came of it. The men may have turned into the next gin-shop round the corner,—but gleaning is just gathering up little ears of corn here and there. And we must not despise even very little efforts to do good, whether they succeed or no.

'From little seeds sweet flowers spring.
Which perfume o'er our pathway fling;
The noble oaks derive their birth
From acorns buried in the earth:
And the bright corn and waving plains,
Rose from the tiny scattered grains.'

You see then that there is plenty of gleaning to be done, though you never go into a corn-field. Don't forget to do it, and ask yourself every night as Naomi asked Ruth,—'Where hast thou gleaned to-day? and where wroughtest thou?' Ruth, ii. 19. J. E. C.

THE FIRST LIE.

I SHALL never forget my first lie, although it happened when I was a very little girl. My youngest sister had a farthing, with which she wished to buy a fig; and being too ill to go down to the shop herself, she asked me to go. Accordingly I went. As I was returning with the fig, done up in a small paper, suddenly the thought occurred to me that I should like to look at the fig. So I very carefully opened the paper, when the fig looked so tempting, I thought I could not help tasting it a little at one end. I had scarcely nibbled that bit before I wanted it all, and without much more thought I ate up the whole fig.

Then, when the fig was all gone, and I had nothing to do but to think, I began to feel very uncomfortable—I stood disgraced before myself. It was long before I reached home, and I went as quickly as I could, and I told my sister that I had lost the farthing. I remember she cried sadly, but I went directly out into the garden, and tried to thing of something else; but in vain—my own guilt stared me steadily in the face, and I was wretched.

Although it wanted a few minutes to our dinner hour, yet it seemed very long to me. I wandered about the garden with a very heavy heart. I thought I would give worlds if it had not happened. When the dinner hour came, I was seated in my high chair at my father's side, when my sister made her appearance, crying, and looking very much grieved.

My father immediately inquired what the matter was. Then my mother stated the story, the conclusion of which was that I had 'lost the farthing.' I can never forget the look of kind, perfectly unsuspecting confidence with which my father turned to me, and, with his large blue eyes full in my face, said, '*Whereabouts* did you lose the farthing? Perhaps we can find it again.' Not for a single instant could I brave that tone and that look, but bursting into tears, I screamed out, 'Oh! I did not lose the farthing! I ate up the fig!'

Then there was a long silence. No one spoke. In an instant I seemed to be separated by an immense distance from all the rest of the family. I left the table, and all that afternoon, the next day, and during the week, I felt very miserable. But, as time wore away, and my father and mother, brothers and sisters, received me back to their love and favour, and I

became happy again. My father showed me how God would pardon my sin for Jesus' sake; but my first lie left a deep mark on my heart and taught me the lesson which I have never forgotten that the way of transgressors is hard.

THE BUTTERFLY.

ONE fine summer morning Nicholas went into the garden to gather his mother a nosegay from his own little flower-bed. As he was going into the garden he saw a beautiful butterfly flitting about from

flower to flower, and its many-coloured wings glittered in the bright sunlight.

Oh, I must catch it! thought Nicholas. He forgot all about his mother and the flowers, and ran after it here and there and everywhere, just where the butterfly happened to go. But the butterfly was always a little too quick for him, and again and again slipped out of his hands just as he was going to catch it.

Nicholas grew more and more eager, and, thinking only about the butterfly, did not take the least care where he went.

At last the pretty insect settled upon

a beautiful young fruit-tree, which this year, for the first time, had begun to blossom. His father had planted it only two years before, and prized it greatly.

Nicholas saw the butterfly settle upon the little tree, and ran up to it and struck it as hard as ever he could with his hat. This time he hit it, and there the poor little thing lay upon the ground with bruised wings, and, with it, all the beautiful blossoms from his father's favourite tree.

Nicholas was now thoroughly frightened at what he had done, and because by his thoughtlessness he had destroyed the beautiful tree. His own little garden, too, was in sad state: he had run over it, in his hurry, again and again, and broken down all the pretty flowers and trodden them into the ground.

He ran back to the house, weeping and crying aloud, without being able to gather even a little nosegay for his dear mother. His father gave him a good scolding for his thoughtlessness; and as, by his own carelessness, he had destroyed his pretty garden, he was cured of his giddy ways for the future.

THE CHILD AND THE BEAR.

A NORWEGIAN STORY.

ONE beautiful summer morning in Norway, when the bells of the distant church-tower were ringing clearly through the air, and calling the pious people of the valley to God's house, that they might there pour out their grateful hearts in prayer and praise, when the merry birds were singing in the branches, the lambs skipping in the meadows, the butterflies flitting over the flowers, and the busy bees gathering the honey, a crowd of happy children were going merrily up a footpath; they were all dressed in their best, and carried little baskets and pitchers on their arms.

Fitz led the joyful procession; the cheerful Louisa and the roguish Thora followed him; next came the serious George and the wild Antony; and, last of all, was the gentle Sophia, while Alvilde, holding her sister's hand, skipped along by her side.

Alvilde was the queen of the day. The sweet child had seen but five summers, and when she lightly ran over the green meadows in her white frock with the blue sash and pink shoes, she looked just like one of those little angels which peep out from among the clouds in Raphael's beautiful pictures.

'I too will gather lots of whortleberries, Sophia, and bunches of flowers, and I will make a great many wreaths; one for you, and one for Fritz, and one for George, and one for Thora, and one for Louisa, and none for Antony, for he would soon tear it in two. Yes, one very, very small wreath Antony shall have. And two for mother, who sits at home with Clara, but none for Clara, she is too little. And such a large wreath for father I shall have to make also.'

But now, when they had come into the wood, Fritz made a halt and pointed to a large moss-covered stone. All sat down, and Sophia spread a white cloth over it, and brought out white bread and cakes, and handed them all round. Fritz had some milk in a bottle which he poured out into a little tin can. The bottle was enclosed in basket-work and hung by a string round his neck. The careful George said, 'Let us keep some to refresh ourselves, as the heat is sure to be greater by-and-bye.'

'May I now?' asked Antony, impatiently; and, when Fritz nodded assent, he put his tin trumpet to his mouth and began to blow so loudly that Sophie put her hands to her ears, and all the sparrows flew away frightened from the bushes.

'Here, here, look how blue it is here! No, there behind you, Fritz, I see many hundred million of whortleberries.'

'Oh, here I find strawberries, which are much sweeter.'

'No, only come this way!'

'I shall go with you.'

'And I shall stay with you, Sophia,' said Alvilde, 'but not all the time remember; afterwards I shall go to Louisa, and then to Thora.'

'I will gather flowers for wreaths.'

'Here let us put the heavy pitcher down among the pine-trees, and then we can come and empty our jugs into it.'

This they did; and the busy little

hands were not weary of gathering, nor the merry little mouths of chattering. The sun rose higher, the shadows grew shorter, but a fresh noontide breeze cooled their glowing cheeks. Then the little girls sat round in a circle, and made wreaths of the heather, the wild roses, the foxgloves, the forget-me-nots, and other gay wild flowers, and each wreath was prettier than the one before it.

But now Alvilde began to get tired, and laid herself down among the berries and wreaths; she shut her blue eyes, and asked Sophia to sing 'Sleep, little child, sleep!' till she fell fast asleep. So Sophia sang one cradle-song after another. The other little girls had jumped up to follow the boys, who had gone up to the top of the mountain, and as they heard Antony's trumpet it was not difficult for them to find them. And Sophia went up too, and saw a pleasant green spot through the middle of which ran a clear brook; round it grew thousands of the most beautiful flowers of all kinds. Then Sophia clapped her hands and shouted aloud with joy, and at once began to pluck the flowers till her apron was quite full.

Meanwhile Alvilde awoke and heard something growling. She jumped up and cried for her sisters, but they were so far away that they did not hear her. She became rather frightened then; but she did not cry. They are sure to come, she thought, and she took her little basket in her hand to eat some whortleberries.

Then there was a rustling among the trees, and a big dark-brown bear came out and went growling up to Alvilde.

At first she was going to cry, and the bright tears stood in her eyes, her little heart beat with terror, and she could not utter a sound. 'You won't do me any harm, bear,' she said at last boldly, 'for I am a very good child; I know you already from your picture in my picture-book. Here, bear, are some whortleberries for you!' at the same time she offered him her little basket. The bear looked at her, gave a low growl, tapped the basket with his paw so that all the berries rolled out upon the ground. He ate them all up, and then began to smell Alvilde's clothes.

'Dear, good bear, you must not do me any harm for I am a very good child,' said Alvilde, frightened. 'There is a basketful of whortleberries for you!' The bear looked at her, threw over the basket, and began to eat. Alvilde was then no longer frightened, but she hastened to give the bear as many whortleberries as she could. The bear grunted quite good-temperedly, and laid one of his fat paws on Alvilde's shoulder. But now he saw the great pewter pitcher, which stood there quite full of whortleberries and strawberries—and bears like strawberries better than anything else,—so he went up to the pitcher and quickly began to eat.

'No, no, bear, you must not have all the berries! they are not all my berries either, so that I cannot give them to you; and besides you will have a stomach-ache if you eat so many, you old bear!' At the same time she went up to the bear and put her little hands on his rough, furry neck to try and push him back. The bear was not offended, but she saw that all her efforts to hinder him were of no avail.

'Well, only wait till Fritz comes, won't he be angry, and soon will drive you away with his stick.'

The great beast looked good-humouredly at the little girl, and stroked her again with his paw.

'Now I will make you look so pretty, bear, if you will only leave my brothers' and sisters' berries alone!'

She took up one of the wreaths and fastened it round the bear's neck, and then put a little wreath on the top of his head.

High up on the top of the mountain Antony's trumpet sounded, and all the boys and girls came singing down the path.

Then Bruin looked round, put his paw once more on Alvilde's shoulder, and went slowly away into the dark wood.

When they had all come down, Alvilde sadly pointed to the empty pitcher, excusing herself as well as she could, and told them all about the bear. They all turned pale with fright, and hurried off so quickly, that in their fright they left flower-wreaths, pitchers, baskets and berries all behind them.

When they came home to their father

and mother, and told them what had happened, their mother embraced Alvilde trembling, pressed her to her bosom, and covered her with both arms, just as if the bear were still there. And all, great and small, crowded round her, and all wept with joy and love. And the father spread his arms over the whole of the little group. Then he went silently up to his chamber, and thanked God who had preserved his dear little girl so wonderfully.

In the autumn a great dark-brown bear was shot, and round his neck the string of Alvilde's wreath was found. J. F. C.

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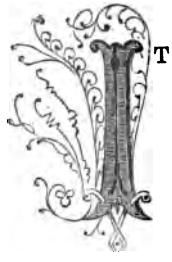
Aunie.

THE JOY OF UNSELFISHNESS.

By the Author of 'Willie Grey, the Young Orphan,' 'The Great Rock Ahead,' &c.

Chapter I.



T was Christmas time, and the real old Christmas weather had set in. In the pretty village of St. Leonard's, the fresh snow lay upon the ground, and, as the villagers met each other on the daily round, the common salutation seemed to be, 'A sharp day this, neighbour; we've had none so cold for many a year.'

Many little hearts were gladdened by this change of weather; for snow-balling and sliding were favourite pastimes at St. Leonard's as in most other places. At Forest Lodge (the only gentleman's house in the place besides the vicarage) there was a very merry party, who welcomed Jack Frost gladly. The whole family was at home for the holidays, and it was the delight of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond to give them as much enjoyment as possible at that season.

The eldest son had just left Eton, and was soon going to Oxford; Margaret was at a boarding-school at Brighton; Samuel and Arthur came next in age; and Annie, a little girl of eleven, was the only one who had not yet left home, but did her lessons with her mother. It was with the greatest pleasure that she looked forward at all times to the holidays, for she had no companions throughout the year with whom she could join in amusements.

On the day of our story, there was one scheme in everybody's head. 'Another night like the last,' they all thought, 'and we shall have some fine skating.'

'And then,' said Arthur, 'Annie shall have her first lesson; she shall be my pupil; how jolly it will be!'

Annie was delighted.

'If you had been at home the week before Christmas, we might have begun then, for the ice was strong for several days; but never mind, we've all the pleasure to come now.'

'It has borne two or three days already,' said William; 'it is to be hoped Lord Blankshire will let people go on the lake to-morrow. Suppose we walk over this afternoon, Sam, and hear something about it.'

'All right!' answered Samuel. And the three brothers set off on their expedition.

The lake was a broad sheet of water in a nobleman's park about two miles from the village. The boys found the roads almost deserted, save where here and there they met a rough cart, rolling slowly and silently through the deep snow. They had a capital walk, and came back with the good news that the park would be open on the morrow.

Annie had a piece of needle-work in hand, which she had promised to complete on the following day. Mrs. Raymond was in the habit of setting her tasks of this sort by way of discipline; for, watching her child with anxious care, she noticed that, like us all, she was inclined to be selfish. One day she had decidedly, but tenderly, warned her of her danger, resolving at the same time that, by a gentle discipline, she would assist her in checking this fault; for she knew that the child's being all alone made her peculiarly liable to it.

Fearing lest the unfinished frock should prove a hindrance to the morrow's skating, Annie resolved to take it up at once, and if possible complete it before nightfall. She worked very industriously till the evening, and was then called away to join in a game of merriment. Fond as she was of a good romp, she would rather have continued her task, and felt inclined to say so; however, her brothers all wished her to come, and Arthur in particular said it would not be half the fun without her, so Annie gave way, resolving that she would rise half-an-hour earlier the next morning to finish her work.

That evening, when Mrs. Raymond came as usual to see her 'safe and warmly laid,' Annie, still in high spirits, kissed her mother fondly and said: 'Oh, mamma! I do feel so happy to-night. It's the holidays that make me so, and the skating; *that* will be better than anything.'

'I am so glad you are happy, my child,' replied her mother; 'and I am very pleased to think that you will have a treat to-morrow.'

'But I hope,' said the little girl, drawing down her mother's head that she might whisper in her ear, 'I hope I have not been selfish; there are a great many things just now. to make me happy, but I've been trying not to think too much about myself.'

Mrs. Raymond cast a glance of deep affection on her child, and answered, 'God likes little children and grown-up people also to be cheerful and merry. If your pleasures caused unhappiness to others, it would then be selfish in you to run after them, but if you can enjoy them without neglecting any one else, or setting aside any duty, it is quite right that you should do so. And I have been thinking, Annie, that you will scarcely have time to-morrow for the needle-work that I gave you to do, so I will excuse it, if you will give the frock back to me, and I will finish it myself.'

'Thank you, mamma! I was making up my mind to get up early to get it done.'

With a light heart Annie fell asleep. As she closed her eyes one thought crossed her mind, of a little friend in far different circumstances from herself. 'How I wish,' thought she, 'that poor little Mary could be like us, as strong, as bright, and as merry.'

Down in the quiet Vicarage lay that same night in her warm bed a little cripple. Mary Delmore was the Vicar's only child. In her infancy she had had a fall, which had so injured the spine that she became deformed. Surgeons had been called in from time to time, but none ever gave hopes of her recovery. The only question was how long she might live, a question which no one could answer. Indeed, so great were now her sufferings at intervals, that her sorrowing parents dared not pray for her life. To have desired that it should be prolonged would have been selfishness. They nursed her with much love and care, and prayed God fervently to give their suffering child patience to 'endure unto the end.'

Chapter II.

The morning was bright and lovely, but again bitterly cold. No sooner was breakfast over at Forest Lodge, than the young folks were busy giving their skates their last polish. Even Mr. Raymond promised to walk round in the course of the day.

There was a gleam of sunshine in every face, and joy in every heart. Mrs. Raymond was busy packing, with her own hands, a basket of lunch, which was to serve the skaters till they should come home late in the afternoon, when the butler brought in a note. After reading it, Mrs. Raymond said aloud, 'I have just received a line from the Vicarage, to ask if Annie will go round this morning, to spend the day with little Mary, who is not so well as usual, and wishes to see her.'

There was instant disappointment in every face, and the buzz of voices was hushed; but Sam and Arthur exclaimed, 'Oh, of course she can't go.'

Annie did not say a word, but only looked towards her mother as if for advice, but she could judge nothing by her mother's face.

William thought she might send word to Mrs. Delmore, that she was particularly engaged to-day, and would see her young friend on the morrow, 'For,' said he, 'it will make no difference to her, and you can never count upon the ice for a single day.'

Just for an instant Annie hesitated; the temptation was strong, but she thought of what her mother had said the night before, and she answered firmly, 'No, Will, you must go without me; the poor little cripple must not be forgotten.'

Margaret kissed her sister as she passed out at the door, saying, 'I am so sorry, dearest, but I think you are right. I would gladly go to the Vicarage in your place, but it would not be the same thing.'

Annie watched the party as they walked down the drive; and having waved to them as they passed out at the gate, she ran upstairs in search of a book that she generally read to Mary. As she did so, the thought of her own disappointment, and the disappointment that she was causing to the others, came before her more and more forcibly; and she could

'The young folks were busy.'

not keep back a tear or two from trickling down her cheek.

'I 'm off now, mamma,' said the child, as she passed the drawing-room door; 'so good-bye for all day.'

'Wait a minute, little one,' cried her father, who was seated in his easy-chair; 'I think you would like to take a rose to your sick friend, and I saw a beauty in the conservatory; let 's go and get it.'

'Oh, papa, how kind of you,' said Annie as she went with her father to the conservatory.

Mr. Raymond plucked the rose from its stem, and gave it to Annie, saying, 'There, my child, that will give pleasure, I think, and so will your visit; I am glad you decided to give up the skating.' This little word of approval was treasured up by the child, and her heart bounded with joy.

When she arrived at the Vicarage, she was met in the hall by Mr. Delmore,—'I thought you would be sure to come, Annie,' he began, 'and our poor little Mary has been counting the minutes.'

'Is she so much worse to-day?'

'She is certainly worse, and very low. I do not think we shall keep her long with us, Annie; and, somehow, she seems to think the same herself. However,' added the Vicar, seeing that Annie's eyes were filling with tears, 'we must brighten up; it will not do to look on the gloomy side. Things are not always as they seem. Now, will you run up to Mary's room; but go softly, for she may be sleeping.'

Annie Raymond did as she was bidden. Entering the room set apart for the sick child's special use, she found her asleep on the couch. The little invalid was wheeled into this apartment every day soon after breakfast, as the change of air and scene was good for her. Her mother was frequently with her, but as she now required constant attendance, she had the services day and night of an elderly woman, who watched her as she would have done her own child. This faithful servant had lived in the family for years, having been the attendant of Mr. Delmore's widowed mother till the day of her death; she was known by the title of 'Nurse,' and there existed a real attachment between the hale old woman of seventy years and the sickly cripple of ten.

A few words of salutation passed between her and Annie; and in her strange accent (for she was a native of Scotland), she said, 'She 's warse to-day, lassie, and we'll na rear the puir bairn, I'm thinking.'

As Nurse whispered these words, she raised her finger to enjoin silence, as a slight movement on the couch showed that Mary was awakening. The grave face resumed its cheerfulness, as Nurse approached her young charge, for she was not going to frighten the little one; she knew better than that.

Presently Mary awoke, and the first thing which attracted her attention, was the rose standing in the centre of the table in a tiny glass of water. The sight of that flower seemed to revive her; for of all things nothing gave her so much pleasure as flowers and music.

'Papa sent it to you,' said Annie, 'out of our conservatory; he thought it would cheer your room.'

'Every one is very kind to me,' was the sweet reply; 'people all do what they can to make me happy; but do you know, Annie, the days are always brighter when you are with me? Papa said he knew you would come to-day, for I felt so dull.' And as Annie gazed on the wan features, she could not help owning how much better it was to be brightening that little sufferer's dreary life than to be taking her own pleasure. She felt that she was fully repaid for her self-denial by the look of gratitude on the thin white face.

Annie tried to amuse her friend by telling her about her brothers and sisters. But she carefully avoided saying a word about the skating expedition. Not for a moment would she allow her friend to guess that she had deprived her of a long-looked-for pleasure. After a while, Mary asked Annie if she could say a hymn, so Annie repeated, in gentle tones, those sweet verses that begin:—

'I knew a little sickly child,
The long, long summer's day,
When all the world was green and bright,
Alone in bed he lay.'

'That is my favourite hymn,' said Mary, when it was finished. 'When I feel sad and lonely, I like to think that the sweet Dove is singing to me; I feel very weary sometimes, Annie, and wish that I could play about and run into the green fields like other children. And then I try hard to be contented, for of course it is naughty to complain; and when I try, the Dove, which papa says means the Holy Ghost the Comforter, seems to give me better

thoughts, and tells me that I have a great many comforts, good parents, kind friends, and a pleasant home.'

'It is not always the healthy and strong,' said Annie, 'who are the most happy.'

'Perhaps not,' returned the cripple; 'but I often think how beautiful it will be in heaven, when we shall have all our senses and limbs, and voices to sing hymns for ever. Oh, I wonder if there will be flowers in heaven?'

'I don't know,' replied Annie; 'but mamma says, we shall find there all that we can possibly want.'

Mary was exhausted by the conversation, and a faint flush had settled on her cheeks, when Nurse came into the room, bringing her some little dainty. 'Here's a wee morsel for my bonnie bairn; it will do ye good to tak it.' And the jelly was tasted, but the sickly appetite refused it.

'I'm sure it looks very good, Nurse, but I'm so weary to-day, I only want rest.' And truly she did require rest, but in this life there was none for her; no sweet, refreshing repose, free from pain and sickness.

In the afternoon, when a servant called to fetch Annie home, Mary reluctantly took leave of her friend, thanking her warmly for her visit. 'Mind you come again soon,' she said, 'and do please thank Mr. Raymond for the rose; tell him I love to look at it.'

(Concluded in our next.)

WHY EVERYBODY IS CROSS.

'OH, Mary,' said a little boy, named John, to his sister, 'I have found a pretty thing. It is a piece of red glass, and when I look through it everything looks red too. The trees, the houses, the green grass, your face, and everything, is red.'

'It is very beautiful,' Mary replied; 'would you like me to teach you a useful lesson from it? You remember the other day you thought everybody was cross with you. Now you were like this piece of glass, which makes everything red because it is red. You were cross, and so you thought everybody about you cross too. If you are in a good humour and kind to every one, all will seem kind to you.'

SCENES IN EARLY LIFE OF DAVID.

SAUL'S DISLIKE AND SUSPICION OF DAVID.

WE have seen how successful David was in his undertakings. By slaying Goliath he had enabled the Israelites to drive the Philistines out of the land. He had *behaved himself* so *wisely* that Saul had *set him over the men of war*, most likely by making him captain of the guard that were in attendance upon the king. He had been *accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants* (1 Sam. xviii. 5), by which we are to understand that he had been received as a brave warrior, who was worthy of the honour bestowed upon him, and well qualified for the duties to which Saul had appointed him. And, besides all this, he had won the love of the true-hearted Jonathan. But if he had continued to be so prosperous, he might have grown self-conceited and self-confident, instead of humbly relying upon God for help as he had hitherto done, or he might even have altogether forgotten Him who was his *Rock* and his *Shelter*, and his *strong Tower from the enemy* (Psalm lxi. 3). It might have been with him, as it afterwards was with his descendant Uzziah, king of Judah, who at first did *that which was right in the sight of the Lord . . . and God made him to prosper and helped him against the Philistines*, and against his other enemies, so that *his name spread far abroad*, until at length he became proud of his success, and *when he was strong his heart was lifted up to his destruction* (2 Chron. xxvi.)

From such temptation David was kept by severe troubles that began soon after his victory had made him famous throughout the land. These troubles arose from sufferings inflicted upon him by the ungodly Saul, whose hatred and injustice embittered this part of his life.

It was during the homeward march of

Saul, David, and the army from the camp at Elah, that the king's affection for David was suddenly turned into suspicion and dislike. According to the custom of the time, the women of Israel came out of each city with songs of triumph, music, and dancing, to hail the conquerors by whom their land had been delivered from the Philistines. The chorus with which the singers answered one another whilst they played on their instruments, was this,—

Saul hath slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands.

(1 Sam. xvii. 7.)

From these words Saul found that already the young son of Jesse had become the people's chief favourite. How greatly this troubled the king we shall understand if we remember that he had valued the praise of his people more than the favour of the Almighty. Once, some years before, when he ought to have been thinking only how to obtain God's pardon for the sins of which Samuel had just declared him to be guilty—the sins of disobedience, rebellion, and stubbornness — he had said, *I have sinned; yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord thy God* (1 Sam. xv. 30). And the kind old prophet had in pity granted his request.

But the fact that the shepherd-boy of Bethlehem was now openly preferred before him was not all that the king discovered from the song of triumph. There came into his mind the thought that this David, whom he had raised to high rank in his army, must be the very man of whom Samuel had said, *The Lord hath sought Him a man after His own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over His people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee* (1 Sam. xiii. 14).

This same thought had led Jonathan, Saul's son, to love David with generous, self-denying affection, but it filled Saul with disquiet, and while the women continued to sing the chorus that was so unwelcome to his ears, there arose in his heart feelings of envy against the rival who had excelled him in war and in gaining the people's praise. *And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands, and what can he have more but the kingdom?* (1 Sam. xviii. 8).

As *the Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul* there was no hope of his checking this sinful feeling of envy, nor even of his struggling against it at all. So it came to pass that *Saul eyed David* (looked upon him with envy, hatred, and fear) *from that day and forward.*

Of all the sins to which our hearts are tempted few are meaner than envy, that feeling which gives us pain at the sight of another person's success; and envy is the first step towards many another sin, such as injustice, strife, hatred, malice, and even murder, as in the case of Cain. St. James says, that *where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work* (iii. 16).

Envy, too, is one of the most miserable of evil feelings, for just as no brightness of any light can be endured by a diseased eye, so no true happiness can abide in an envious heart, and thus, besides being a sin, it becomes a punishment also.

The way to keep envy out of our hearts is to seek from God the graces of true contentment and true Christian charity. Then being content with such success as God shall see fit to give us and loving our neighbour as we love ourselves, we shall rejoice at his prosperity as if it were our own.

WILLIE AND MARY; OR, A GRANDFATHER'S STORY.

(*Concluded from p.* 150.)

POOR, thoughtless girl! She was sorry enough for it next time she went to see her grandmother; for there sat the poor old woman, shivering over a mere handful of fire, and Mary sighed to think she could not offer her a single shilling until she should receive her next quarter's wages.

'A few weeks after this—it was a bright morning, and the pure white snow glittered like diamonds in the sunshine around old Hester's cottage—when Mary, who had

Women of Israel meeting Saul. P 166.

'The long-lost boy stood before them.'

only the night before heard of her grandmother's illness, entered the little garden-gate, and, as she wiped the tears from her swollen eyes, walked quickly up to the well-known door, and gently lifted the latch.

'"Hush!" said a voice, as she entered, "she is asleep now; or, at least, I think so. Poor dear, she's been praying and talking beautiful all the morning. She says she would like to see her poor Willie once more, if it be the Lord's will."

'"It is very kind of you, I'm sure, Mrs. Sparks, to step in so often to grandmother," said poor Mary, as she again wiped her eyes. "It was only last night I heard she was worse."

'"It isn't much as I can do," replied the woman; "to my thinking, the poor old lady might have lived longer if she'd had enough to take to, but she's been almost starved with hunger and cold together."

'Old Hester opened her eyes; she hadn't been asleep, but was only dozing.

'"I shall see him again—yes," she exclaimed, as she raised her arms, as if to grasp some much-loved object. "Willie, my boy, you're coming. I know you're coming. You'll soon be here."

'She then sank back upon her pillow, almost fainting. Mary knelt beside her bed. "Grandmother, grandmother," she said, "oh! do get well. I'll be a better grandchild to you than I've ever been before. Oh! granny, here's ten shillings of my wages. Missus gave it me this morning. She said as you were ill, I might be glad of it."

'As she spoke, she put the ten shillings upon the counterpane.

'"My poor child!" said the old woman kindly, and she laid her withered hand upon the head of the unhappy girl, "keep it to buy a bit of mourning for your old granny, she won't be here much longer. But you'll try to love God, Mary; you'll try to make Willie happy; you'll both meet me in heaven. Don't cry, child. I'm so happy! I'm going where I shall feel hunger and cold no more."

'But still Mary's tears fell fast; there seemed no comfort for her.

'"Oh!" she kept saying to herself, "it is too late now. I might have loved her more; but, oh! it is too late!"

'And thus the morning wore away, and the shades of night drew on. The wind rose higher and higher, and blew even louder than it does now, Elsie,' said old Davy, sadly, as he drew his little grandchild closer to him, 'and Mary still watched by old Hester's bed. Several times, when a sudden gust of wind half lifted the latch of the door, the old woman had risen in bed, exclaiming, with outstretched arms, "He's coming! he's coming!"

'Suddenly the storm seemed to die away in the distance, and, for a time, there was a quiet hush. And then there came a gentle tapping at the door; and, as Mary listened, she heard it repeated louder each time. The poor child started from her seat in terror, exclaiming, "What can it be?"

"Don't be afraid, child," said old Hester, "open the door. It's Willie. I know it's Willie!"

'But the door was already opened, and the long-lost boy stood before them.

'"Grandmother! Grandmother!" he cried, "they say in the village that you are dying; that I am too late to save you now; that you have been half starved with cold and hunger. But, look, granny, this is yours—all this." And he poured a purse full of money out on the counterpane. "Now, you can have all you want. We'll be so happy. Granny! granny! Why don't you speak?"

'The old woman raised herself in bed, and clasping her long-lost boy to her heart, exclaimed, "My child! my child! love poor Mary. Meet me in heaven."

'Gradually she let go her hold; then, sinking on her pillow, gave one sigh, and her happy spirit took its flight.'

'Is that all, grandfather?' asked Elsie, looking up with tearful eyes into old Davy's face.

'Yes, child, that's all; and now, should you like to know who Willie and Mary were?'

'Why, grandfather, do I know them?'

'You know one of them, at any rate,' replied the old man, 'for you're sitting on Willie's lap now. "Willie" I called myself, for I didn't want you to know who it was till I'd finished.'

'Why, grandfather,' exclaimed little Elsie, with wondering eyes, 'I never knew you'd been to sea.'

'Yes, Elsie, I went that once, and that was enough for me. And now, my little darling, I think it 's time for you to go to bed.'

Little Elsie jumped down from her grandfather's knee, and, after saying her prayers, was soon off to bed and asleep, and dreamt about the story of 'Willie and Mary.'

SWALLOWS.

'TWAS Autumn time, and winds were blowing,
Yellow and brown the leaves were growing,
In-doors the fires were brightly glowing,
And all things showed the Summer going.

Seated upon a churchyard gate
Two wise old Swallows held debate,
'The Winter comes as sure as fate,
We must be gone ere 'tis too late.'

And then up chirped each little bird,
Their young ones soon the summons heard;
Perched in a row they never stirred,
But listened for their parents' word.

'Children, you've often heard us say,
That there would come no distant day
When in this land we could not stay,
But all must start and fly away.

'Twill soon be here—you all must try
How swift and strong you each can fly,
First darting on—then soaring high,
Till lost in sight up in the sky.

We all must strive to do our best,
At night there'll be no sheltering nest;
We've far to go without a rest,
To distant lands in South and West.

'We counsel each for his own sake,
Practice alone can perfect make,
And sudden storms may o'er us break
As we our toilsome journey take.'

The parent birds (their warning said)
Flew off and circled overhead,
The young ones quickly with them fled,
Save two, who stayed behind instead.

These spoke together sullenly,
And said, 'There is no reason why
That we should trouble now to try,
We know quite well that we can fly.'

And thus they wasted day by day,
Their parents' voice would not obey,
The Autumn passed, the clouds grew grey,
But not one bit prepared were they.

At last the wise old birds discerned
The weather now had really turned,
They called their children who had learned,
And those who had their counsel spurned.

Together now they make their start,
Together now they all depart,
And those who well had learnt the art,
Flew with a brave and steady heart.

But, ah! those weak and foolish two
So little of their business knew,
That faint and weary soon they grew,
And vainly did their folly rue.

They were indeed in wretched plight,
They had not practised for their flight,
Their brethren left them out of sight,
And down they dropped and died ere night.

Children and Swallows must be taught
To do their duties as they ought,
Or both will find, when least they thought,
To what sad end they will be brought.

F. C.

THE BEST SCHOLAR.

WHO is the best scholar, or have you any best at your school?' I asked a group of school-girls.

'Lucy Towne,' quickly replied three or four at once.

'What makes her best?' I asked.

'Oh, 'cause,' bashfully answered one whom I looked at. As that proved nothing, I asked the others.

'She recites best,' answered one.

'She's always ready, and never keeps the class waiting,' said another.

'She never gets excused,' said a third.

'She's never late,' said a fourth.

'She keeps all the rules,' said a fifth.

'She helps *me*,' said the littlest.

'She's real nice at play, and never gets angry,' said a seventh.

'And *something else*,' said one who had spoken before.

'Ah, what is that?' I asked.

'Mother says Lucy loves and obeys God,' answered the child.

The secret, then, of her being the best scholar is because she is *God's* scholar, and is taught by the Holy Spirit those precious lessons of penitence, humility, and

The Best Scholar.

love, which cannot but make her a good scholar in any school.

'How old is Lucy?' I asked, becoming much interested in what I heard of her.

'My age,' said the chief spokesman, 'twelve this month.'

'I suppose Lucy studied *all* the time. I am sure I can't do *that*,' some little girl says. But I found afterwards that Lucy

had time for many things besides her books; for when she studied she *studied;* and when she played, she played.

Her favourite place of study, in pleasant summer days, was the bank under an old oak in her father's garden. Here she used to go alone with her books, and before opening them she prayed to the Lord Jesus to help her to fix her mind on the lesson, and not waste her time over her books. So, if a lady-fly lighted on the page, she did not stop to talk to the lady-fly; or if a bird sung overhead, she did not attend his concert; or if a bee buzzed round a wild violet, she let it go about its business, and she minded hers. Thus, you see, things which usually tempt heedless children to idleness and inattention, had no effect upon Lucy Towne, because she was armed against them beforehand, by having a distinct purpose in her mind, and by prayer for grace to carry it out.

And I well know, if all the children in the school would become God's scholars first, be taught of Him, mind His rules, and love His word, and learn His lessons, all the grumbling, and fretting, and crying which now cloud school-life would pass off, and school become one of the happiest and busiest spots on earth.

THE PARROT.

A PARROT from the Spanish main,
Full young, and early caged, came o'er,
With bright wings, to the bleak domain
Of Mulla's shore.

To spicy groves where he had won
His plumage of resplendent hue,
His native fruits, and skies and sun,
He bade adieu.

Instead, he watched the smoke of turf,
A heathery land and misty sky,
And turned on rocks and raging surf
His golden eye.

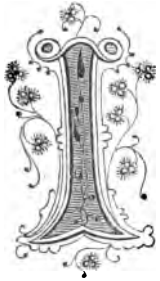
But petted, in our climate cold
He lived and chatted many a day;
Until, with age, from green and gold
His wings grew grey.

At last, when blind and seeming dumb,
He scolded, laughed, and spoke no more,
A Spanish maiden chanced to come
To Mulla's shore;

She hailed the bird in Spanish speech;
The bird in Spanish speech replied,
Flapped round his perch, with joyous screech,
Drooped down and died.

CAMPBELL.

THOUGHTS FOR CHILDREN.



I OFTEN think it would help children to bear the troubles they feel they have, if any one would tell them, again and again, and in easy words, to remember that the Lord Jesus bore the same troubles, or some very like them.

If it is a great trial to hear that they must go to lessons when they are at play; or to find that bed-time has come; or if they think it hard to go into the cold water in the morning, or to be at any time washed, and rubbed, and dried, only think that He was also once a little child, and was in all things tended and cared for, as a child should be, by His mother Mary!

We are not told in the Bible how He bore all these troubles, but we *are* told that he was obedient to His mother Mary, and to Joseph the carpenter. He must have been taught by them or by schoolmasters, for we know that at twelve years old He had learnt a great deal of the knowledge which they taught then in the schools of the town where He lived.

How this should teach children to be patient, and to bear all they have to bear, and to do all they have to do! They would wish to be like Jesus, I am sure; and it is never too early to begin, because, as you so well know, He was once even a baby!

Jesus had a little cousin, called John, and *perhaps* the two children, who were very nearly the same age, played together, or, at least, we may feel sure that some other little children played with the child Jesus, if John did not; and when I see a family or a party of children playing together quite happily and good-naturedly—the little ones obeying the elders, and the bigger children giving way to the little ones, and being kind and gentle with them, and all of them cheerfully, and willingly, and pleasantly doing what they ought, and what those over them wish them to do—I often think, If the Holy Child had been one of that group He would have behaved as these do. He would be like that great boy who is so kind and good to the others, who uses his strength to help and not to hurt and tease the others;—or He would be like that little boy who does as he is bid, and does not quarrel nor act selfishly, nor give more trouble than he can help to the others;—or He would be like that other, who looks so kind and good-natured, and has no peevish frown when any one pushes against him, and who has perhaps given up his place to some little one who was not so well off. Any child whom we see doing right in any situation or circumstances might make us think the great thought—If the Child Jesus had been so placed He would have done the same! It is indeed a wonderful thought, but is it not true?

I once read some verses for little children about this, and they began thus:—

I will tell you now a story,
How the Lord—the Lord of Glory—
Once forsook His throne on high,
Passed the seats of glory by,
And full of love, and patience mild,
He became a little Child.

All the troubles children bear
The Lord of Glory did not spare
Himself to suffer for our sake,
When He did our nature take,
For full of love and tempers mild,
He became a little Child.

Now do you, very little ones, feel what this means? It means that you may really say to yourself, 'If I am only four years old, the Lord Jesus was once a child

of four years old, and He had to do a great many of the things I have to do. Then let me behave as I think He would have behaved.' If you are six years old, or eight or nine it is the same, He was once that age too, and as He was really man, as we are taught in the creeds, so He was really a boy, with all the temptations and weaknesses—all the high spirits and cheerfulness—all the plays and the occupations of boyhood were His, only *without sin!* That is the great difference, and you must aim at being the same! 'Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect,' He Himself says. Try, try; you cannot be perfect, but you will be nothing if you do not try.

If you are a lad of eleven or twelve you may feel almost as though one verse of the Bible was especially for you. I mean that verse which says that when He was twelve years old He went home with Mary and Joseph when they told Him to do so, and was obedient unto them when at that home.

Perhaps you will like the following ballad, which says, in rough country verse, what I have been saying in easy prose, and it adds some more thoughts, which may suit some of you.

OLD COUNTRY BALLAD FOR EVENING.

It was not into houses gay,
That Christ a child came down to stay;
But even to a stable poor,
Where that Child-Christ came thro' the door.
Little children, when ye sleep,
Jesus Christ you safe will keep.

Not for the king upon his throne
Came Jesus Christ down to atone
More than He came for me or you,
And yet for kings He did come too.
Little children, when ye sleep,
Jesus Christ you safe will keep.

The bairnies wee, when they do play,
Might think how He was once as they;
Lads, when they their troubles meet,
Might fling those troubles by His feet.
Little children, when yo sleep,
Jesus Christ you safe will keep.

Babes and children, youths or men,
What tries you now tried Jesus then,
'In all things tempted like as we,'
Yet sinless, we are told, was He.
Little children, when ye sleep,
Jesus Christ you safe will keep.

Down on earth He came to stay,
Up from earth He went away.
We must travel the same road,
Let us travel up to GOD.
Little children, when ye sleep,
Jesus Christ you safe will keep.

Through the grave and gate of death,
By clouding eye and failing breath,
By sudden, or by lingering end,
Unto that gate our steps must tend.
Little children, when ye sleep,
Jesus Christ you safe will keep.

From cottage poor and houses gay,
We all must go when comes our day;
We all must go from earth away,
Where Jesus Christ came for to stay.
Little children, then ye 'll sleep,
And Jesus Christ you safe will keep. Amen.

J. E. C. F.

LITTLE KINDNESSES.

A LITTLE boy has a hard lesson given him at school, and his teacher asks him if he thinks he can get it; for a moment the little fellow hangs down his head, but the next he looks brightly up:

'I can get my sister to help me,' he says. That is right, sister; help little brother, and you are binding a tie round his heart that may save him in many an hour of dark temptation.

'I don't know how to do this sum; but brother will show me,' says another one.

'Sister, I 've dropped a stitch in my knitting; I tried to pick it up, but it has run down, and I can't fix it.'

The little girl's face is flushed, and she watches her sister with a nervous anxiety, while she replaces the naughty stitch.

'Oh, I am so glad!' she says, as she receives it again from the hands of her sister, all nicely arranged. 'You are a good girl, Mary.'

'Bring it to me sooner, next time, and then it won't get so bad,' said the gentle voice of Mary.

The little one bounds away with a light heart to finish her task.

If Mary had not helped her, she would have lost her walk in the garden. Surely it is better to do as Mary did, than to say, 'Oh, go away, and don't trouble me;' or to scold the little one all the time you are performing the trifling favour.—*S. S. Visitor.*

'Sister, I've dropped a Stitch.'

'CHATTERBOX' Volume for 1869 is now ready, price 3s. or 5s.

The Volume of the "PRIZE" for 1869 will be Ready on the 15th of November.

A beautiful Coloured Engraving, 'OUR BABY,' *will be* given *with the January Number of the* 'CHILDREN'S PRIZE 1870.' *New Subscribers are requested to order their* 'Prize' *Immediately.*

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. XII.] DECEMBER, 1869. [One Penny.

Midge.

MIDGE.

MASTER MIDGE has been a member of our household for about two years, and his many curious ways and general good conduct make me think some of your readers might like to know him. I therefore enclose his *carte-de-visite*. I must first tell you that he is a little rough Scotch terrier, with bowed legs and prominent teeth; but, notwithstanding these imperfections, he is thought a pretty fellow by those who know him.

The first peculiarity I shall mention is his great dislike to his weekly bath. A common question on a Friday morning is, 'Whatever is the matter with Midge this morning; how miserable he looks!' and the answer will be, 'Why, it is Friday morning,' which is saying, that it is his washing day. And truly he is a picture of misery, trembling in every limb and sneaking in and out of his kennel. And then, when the tin in which he is washed appears, his terror is quite sad; he will leap on my knee, as if he wished me to protect him. But I am obliged to deliver him over to the servant, who washes him. It is not that he is unkindly treated when being washed, as I have often washed him myself, to see if I could get him to leave off being afraid, but it makes no difference.

After the terrible bath is over, the change in Midge's spirits is marvellous. He skips and capers about, and is as happy as any little dog can be; and I am afraid if your readers were to see him with his white breast, and bluish black back, the hair combed and parted down the middle—they would be tempted to envy our pet.

Another of his curious ways is, that now and then he will disappear as soon as he can get into the street in the morning and not come home again. At first we wondered what had become of him; but we soon discovered that he had trotted off to some relatives of ours, who live in another part of the town, five minutes' walk from our house. On his arrival at their door he barks to announce himself, and on gaining admission will chase the cats if he is anywhere about, and go through the wildest capers to show his delight. When I go up in the evening to fetch him home, he knows what a naughty dog he is to run away, so comes coaxingly up to me with ears down, as much as to say, 'I'm very sorry, but I know you'll forgive me,' and then he gets a pat and a nod, and is as happy as ever.

DAISY'S LESSONS.

ONCE in cloudless summer weather,
Many years ago,
Wandering among the heather,
Where the flowerets blow,
Roamed a little, dark-eyed maiden,
Pretty Daisy Graeme.
'I am weary,' made she murmur,
'Life is all the same—
Drudge, drudge, work and work!
Can there be no rest?
Is there not some happy isle,
Where, for ever blest,
Children play and sport light-hearted,
All the summer long,
While the tranquil air above them
Bright birds fill with song?"

But the flowers, and rocks, and brooklet
Flowing very near,
All alike gave back the answer
To her listening ear—
'Work, my child, is blessed and holy,
He who does the most—
Worketh for his suffering fellows,
Counts no moment lost
Is the happiest of the happy;
Try, my child, and see;
For the earth is broad, and, darling,
Know it waits for *thee!*"

Little Daisy stored the lesson
In her childish heart,
Promising in life's great warfare
Well to do her part.
Think you not she is as happy
As long years ago,
Roaming *idle* 'mong the heather,
Where the flowerets blow.

Little Corporal.

SCENES IN EARLY LIFE OF DAVID.

SAUL'S ANCER WITH DAVID.

THE very next day after that on which Saul had begun to feel envious of David, there came upon the miserable king a fit of his former malady. *And it came to pass on the morrow that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul and he prophesied in the midst of the house.* It is thought by some that as his mind had just been disturbed afresh about the approaching loss of his kingdom and about David's being so popular, he was now made to foretell that David would succeed him as king of Israel. But others suppose the word 'prophesy' here means, that in his frenzy he uttered strange and terrible sounds such as people make when suffering from a disordered mind.

When David heard the king's voice he took his harp, and, remembering how much good the king had once gained from it, he *played with his hand as at other times.* But now, instead of soothing Saul's mind, the sound only increased his wrath against the minstrel, whom he knew to be his rival in the people's affections.

It happened that there was in the king's hand a javelin, or short spear, not meant to be used for a weapon, but to be held as a sign of kingly authority, much as a sceptre is now carried by monarchs or borne before them on certain state occasions. *And Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it.* (1 Sam. xviii. 10, 11.)

But though he was thus a murderer in will, God did not suffer him to become one in deed, for David avoided the blow, and went out from the king's presence. As this happened twice, Saul began to think, and rightly too, that David's life was specially protected by God. *And Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him, and was departed from Saul.*

Then Saul *removed him* from his court, *and made him his captain over a thousand,* a higher rank than he had yet attained, hoping, no doubt, that he would soon be slain in battle. *But David behaved himself wisely in all his ways, and all Israel and Judah loved him because he went out* (perhaps on successful expeditions against the Philistines) *and came in before them,* so that all could see how wise and valiant he was.

Then Saul tried to get rid of him by various crafty means, and he *became David's enemy continually.* But as God had aided him to turn aside from the blow aimed at him with the javelin, so He caused him to escape all the secret plots that were laid against his life. It was a trying time for David, but he was upheld by his faith in God's goodness, and by the knowledge that His favour was protecting him like a shield; so that he was able to say, *My times are in Thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me . . . Oh, how great is Thy goodness which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee, which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men.* (Psalm xxxi. 15, 19.)

When, through our Lord Jesus Christ, we are at peace with our Heavenly Father, no persecution can make us afraid nor take from us that true inner rest which He gives to His faithful soldiers and servants. Indeed, our earthly enemies will prove to be our heavenly friends, if the ill-treatment we receive makes us pray more earnestly and live nearer to our God.

Father of love, our Guide and Friend,
O lead us gently on
Until life's trial time shall end,
And heavenly peace be won.
We know not what the path may be,
As yet by us untrod;
But we can trust our all to Thee,
Our Father and our God.

THE JOY OF UNSELFISHNESS.

(*Continued from page* 166.)

CHAPTER III.

WHEN Annie reached home, she found the whole party assembled in the drawing-room as brisk as possible, conversing cheerily over the day's proceedings. She became quite interested in all that they

Javelin cast at David. P. 179.

'Why, here's the old Nurse.'

had to tell, and could not restrain a regret now and then that she had not been with them. 'To-morrow I will go,' said she; 'there will be nothing to prevent me *then*.'

'Don't make too sure,' replied William; 'I expect the ice will not be safe to-morrow; I told you we could never reckon upon it for many days together,' However, Annie seemed but little troubled, for she did not half believe the frost would break up so soon.

'How did you find your poor little

friend, Annie?' asked her mother after a while.

'Oh, mamma, she is very sadly to-day.'

'Poor child! her's has been a melancholy life; how different from yours, Annie!'

'It has, indeed, mamma; she longs to get out into the country, for she loves all things bright and beautiful.'

The following morning a rapid thaw had taken place during the night. Rain was falling, and there was a general lamentation, and Annie was not a little laughed at about her first skating lesson, but she bore it very good naturedly.

Presently Mrs. Raymond came into the drawing-room, bearing in her hand a note that she had just received from Mrs. Delmore, and from which she read the following passage aloud: 'Our darling child is unconscious this morning, we shall have to keep her quite quiet for the next few days, so do not let Annie come to see her. Her visit yesterday was a great comfort to our poor sufferer.'

This sad news was a great shock to Annie; the two children had been drawn together in a peculiar manner, neither having any other companion of her own age. Mary had learned, in some sort, to lean upon her more fortunate friend, and Annie had gained from the afflicted child much of that heavenly-mindedness, which is frequently taught us without our knowing it, by a cheerful sufferer.

Two or three days wore on much in the usual manner. The snow had nearly all disappeared. Annie Raymond was just setting off with Arthur for a country walk, when she saw an elderly woman coming up the lane. 'Why, here's the old Nurse,' she cried; 'Mary Delmore's nurse; I wonder what brings her here to-day.'

'Not to ask you to go to the Vicarage again, I hope.'

'I don't know, Arthur; but I must stop and ask after poor Mary. I have not seen her since the day you went out skating, she has been too ill ever since.'

There was no need, however, to inquire after her, for Nurse came to meet Annie when she saw her, and began, 'The bairn's gane, Miss Annie; she's gane awa, and there's mickle sorrow for us a'.'

Arthur did not understand her; but his sister soon guessed that her little friend had died during the night, and, as Nurse meant, had gone away to her distant home. The phrase brought back to Annie's mind, Mary's own longing for the beautiful heaven where we should have all our senses and limbs in perfection, and voices to sing hymns of praise for ever.

The holidays had ended, and the family circle at Forest Lodge was again reduced to Mr. and Mrs. Raymond and their little girl, who were passing a quiet evening together, when Mr. Delmore was announced. He was more than usually grave, and yet, when he spoke of his loss, there was a cheerfulness in his voice which was almost surprising.

Presently he drew out of his pocket a small Bible, which he handed to Annie, saying, 'She left this for you as a token of her love and gratitude. You will keep it, Annie, I know, for her sake, and value it for its own sake as well as hers. It was the book that she had more constantly in use than any other.'

Annie accepted it in silence. 'I can never tell you,' continued the Vicar, 'the pleasure your visits used to give to our dear child, and particularly your last visit. She became unconscious the next day, and she never was sensible till a few hours before her death; but during that short time she spoke of you, and begged me to bring you this Bible. You will find on the fly-leaf a text, from which Mary used to get much consolation, when all human words failed to comfort her. I have written it there, hoping that, while it reminds you of her, it will prove a guide to you during the whole of your life.'

'Thank you,' replied the child; 'Oh, thank you, Mr. Delmore; I shall never forget her, I am quite sure.' Annie would fain have said more, but her voice was choked by her sobs.

Not till after the Vicar had left the house, did the little girl open Mary's Bible; and then she found this text written on the front page:—

'*If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.*'

CHRISTMAS.

ONCE in the pastures of the East,
In the deep hush of night,
The glorious day of Heaven shone forth
All radiantly bright;

And soft sweet angel voices then
Sang hymns of peace on earth,
Glad tidings of great joy for us,
The Holy Saviour's birth.

No group of royal palaces
Welcomed the King of Heaven;
No reverence of many lands
To the Lord of all was given;

But He was born in poverty
Beneath a lowly shed,
The one fair thing the silver star
Which shone above His head.

O! gentle Jesus, once a child,
A child doth praise Thee now,
Make my heart pure as Thine was pure,
Let me be as wert Thou;

And meek and humble let me grow,
And holy let me be,
Then brighter than that silver star
God's love shall shine on me.

E. M. A. F.

THE LITTLE GIRL WHO READ HER BIBLE.

A LITTLE girl who read her Bible, came one day in great delight to her mother, showing some plums that a friend had given her.

The mother said, 'It was very kind.'

'Yes,' said the child, 'very kind indeed; and the lady gave me some more than these, but I have given some away.'

The mother asked to whom she had given them.

The child replied, 'I have given them to a girl who pushes me off the path, and makes faces at me.'

Upon being asked why she gave them to her, she answered, 'Because I thought it would make her know that I wished to be kind to her, and she will not, perhaps, be unkind and rude to me again.'—*Glasgow Infants' School Magazine.*

THE CONVICT'S CHILD.

GRANDMOTHER, tell me a tale of old times!
Eight has just rung from St. Anthony's chimes.
Let it be either for laughing or weeping,
After a story, I'm surest of sleeping.'

'What shall it be? You have heard all my tales
—Grandfather's voyage in search of the whales;
Your uncle's adventures by land and by sea,—
Ah, few would care for them but you and me!

'Tell me the story *now*, Grandmother dear!
You promised me once I should certainly hear
Of my own father, and where he is gone,
Why does he leave you and me all alone?

Why do you cry? Is it too sad to tell?
Something I should not have asked you for?
Well!
Never mind now—let us rather sit still,
And watch the light dying from valley and hill.'

'Elsie! you know how the story of old
Tells of the Shepherd and sheep of the fold:
Green were the pastures, the river flowed fair,
Safely they wandered—but *one* was not there.

One—only one—that was far, far away;
Lost in the wilderness lonely it lay:
The wolf had his den and the lion his lair—
Briers and thorns encompassed it there.

And it was so with your father, my dearest—
Sadly he sinned when his light was the clearest!
Once he was bravest and best of them all—
Ah! we wept bitterly over his fall!

Early he left us for yonder great city;
Ever since then I have felt so much pity
For the young, thoughtless lads, often sent there,
No father's eye o'er them—no mother's care.'

* * * *

'Bright was his home, as your mother could make it;
How could he find in his heart to forsake it!
Wicked men lured him away from her side,
Bringing you home, dear, in sorrow she died.

And though he wept like a child as he laid her
Under the turf, where the willow-trees shade her,
Deeper and deeper he plunged into shame,
Grown alike heedless of honour or fame.

Night after night with some gamblers he played,
In their dark haunt they had secretly laid
Schemes that required some false bills to be shown,
Your father wrote on them—*a name not his own!*'

'Grandmother! was it so wrong, though he did it?
Ah! to be sure, it *looked* wrong, that they hid it!'
'Yes, Elsie; that was a *forgery*, dear.
When you are older, all that will be clear.

He stood in the dim prison-cell, when alone
We met: he was silent and still as a stone.
I could but weep—there was nothing to tell;
Only one word he would utter—"Farewell!"

I saw him once more, though my sight was fast failing,
Blinded by tears—when the vessel was sailing;
I knew where he stood on that grim convict-ship;
I swooned, and my last blessing died on my lip.'

* * * *

'Grandmother! did not the Shepherd of old
Follow His lost sheep through that thorny world?'
'Yes, darling! Read me the words once again;
More than all others they soothe my heart's pain;
For I grow feeble, and oftentimes fear,

That when he comes back he will not find me here.
And when I leave you to dwell far from care,
By the still waters, my last longing prayer
Shall be—"Let my lost one be yet gathered here!"'

H. R.

WHAT A LITTLE BOY CAN DO.

'I WISH, I wish, I wish,' said a little boy, who awoke early one morning, and lay in bed thinking, 'I wish I was grown up, so as to do some good. I'd be a missionary; or I'd get rich, and give away

my money to poor people; but I'm only a little boy, and it will take me plenty of years to grow up.' And so, he was going to put off doing good till then? 'Well,' he said to himself while he was dressing, 'I know what I *can* do. I can *be* good; that 's left to little boys.' Therefore when he was dressed, he knelt and asked God to help him to be good, and try to serve Him all day with all his heart, and not *forget*. Then he went down-stairs to finish his sums.

No sooner was he seated with his clean slate before him, than his mother called him to run into the wood-house and find his little brother. He did not wish to leave his lesson, yet he cheerfully said, 'I'll go, mother;' and away he ran. And how do you think he found 'bubby?' With a sharp axe in his hand. 'I chop,' he said; and quite likely the next moment he would have chopped off his little toes. The little boy only thought of minding his mother; but who can tell if his ready obedience did not save his baby brother from being a cripple for life?

As he was going on an errand for his mother, he saw a poor woman whose foot had slipped on the ice, and she had fallen; and, in falling, she had spilled her bag of beans and basket of apples, and some wicked boys were snatching up her apples and running off with them. The little boy stopped and said, 'Let me help you pick up your beans and apples;' and his nimble fingers quickly helped her out of her mishap. He only thought of being kind; he did not know how this kind act comforted the poor woman long after she got home, and how she prayed God to bless him.

At dinner, as his father and mother were talking, his father said roughly, 'I shan't do anything for that man's son; the old man always did his best to injure me.' 'But, father,' said the little boy, looking up into his father's face, 'does not the Bible say we must return *good* for evil?' The little boy did not know that his father thought of what his son had said all the afternoon, and said within himself, 'My boy is more of a Christian than I am; I must be a better man.'

When he came home from school at night, he went to the cage and found his dear canary bird dead. 'O mother! and I tended birdie so, and I loved him so, and he sang so sweetly;' and the little boy burst into tears over his poor favourite. 'Who gave birdie's life, and who took it again?' asked his mother, stroking his head. 'God,' he answered, through his tears, 'and He knows best;' and he tried to quiet himself.

A lady sat in a dark corner of the room. She had lost her *two* birdies; and though she hoped they had taken angels' wings and gone to nestle in the heavenly land, she would rather have her little sons back to *her* nest again. But when she beheld the little boy's patience and submission to his Father in heaven, she said, 'I too will trust Him, like this little child.' Her heart was touched, and she went home with a little spring of healing gushing up there, and she became henceforth a better mother to the children yet left to her.

When the little boy laid his head on his pillow that night, he thought, 'I am too small to *do* any good; but oh, I do wish to *be* good, and to love the Saviour Who came down from heaven to die for me. I do wish to become one of the heavenly Father's dear children.'

The heavenly Father's children are sometimes called children of light; and does it not seem as if beams of light shone from this little child, warming, blessing everybody that came in his way? Who will say he did not *do* good?

THE SEA-BEAR.

ONE of the pleasantest sights in all London for children is the Zoological Gardens, where they can see so many of the animals they have been used to read about. Isabel and Mary were two little girls, and one day their mother took them to this charming place. After they had walked about a little while they came to a part of the garden where there were a great many people. They found there a round pond raised above the ground and surrounded by a stone balustrade, so that it was like a huge basin. In the centre

was a platform of stone, on which was a chair, a man with a long beard dressed in waterproof clothing was sitting on the chair, and for a while they could not think why he stayed there. All at once with a great deal of splashing, a large animal rose out of the water and flopped its way to the feet of the man. It was about six feet long, more like a seal that any other creature that my little readers are likely to have seen, and was in fact a Sea-Bear, the only one ever brought alive to England. It had long whiskers like a cat, and big powerful teeth, the hind feet were like flappers and appeared to grow from the body, it was a dusky black all over, the fur being so close and smooth that the water did not rest upon it. In the water it moved swiftly, out of the water it scuttled along in a curious awkward way, one could not call it walking.

Now I must tell you what pleased Isabel and Mary most, was the strange way in which it did what the keeper told it. They did not know why he sat on the chair placed as I have said on a platform in the middle of the water, nor why he wore the waterproof clothing, but they soon found out. When the Sea-Bear came to his feet, he said to it in French, for he was a Frenchman, *Embrasse moi*, which means 'kiss me,' and the strange creature raised itself on its broad hind flappers, leant against his knees, and so put its queer head close to its keeper's and then slid down. The keeper told him to do it again, and again it kissed in its odd way. Next he took a small fish out of his pocket, threw it into the water, and the great animal slid off the platform and dived into the water for the food. Then it swam several times round the basin, so fast that Isabel and Mary could scarcely catch sight of it as it passed by them.

All at once the keeper called out *Montez* (mount) when the Sea-Bear directly left off swimming, which it seemed to like so much, and climbed on to some planks and came to its keeper; when it was close by him he talked to it and played with it for a while, and at last said *Chantez*, the French for 'Sing,' then the Sea-Bear opened its mouth and roared, which the little girls thought was a strange kind of singing, though it was the best the Sea-Bear could manage. Isabel and Mary knew some French words, but they did not know all that the Sea-Bear did, so they thought it was a very clever animal.

When it was on the ground its movements were very funny. With its great flappers it shuffled quickly along, keeping as near as it could to its master, who gave it small fish from time to time as the reward for doing what it was told. He was a French sailor who had landed from a whaling ship, on the coast of Terra del Fuego, which you will find on your maps at the southern end of America; there are hardly any people on this island, so the Sea-Bear lives safely unless molested by men from the ships that sometimes touch there. It is a fierce animal, and will turn and chase those who venture to attack it.

This animal was captured by the sailor letting it pursue him a long way inland, and when it was thoroughly tired out, and unable to get to the water where it swims with so much ease, he made it a prisoner and took it on board ship, where it became his pet and plaything, and being a sensible creature it soon learnt to love its master, and understood what he said.

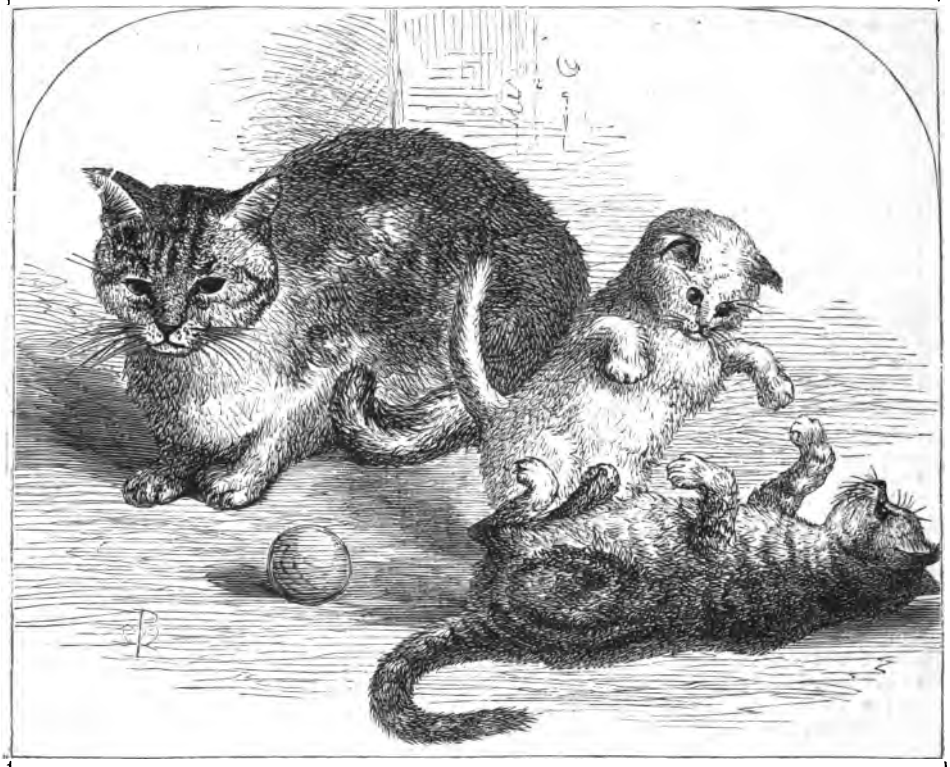
Sea-Bears are warm-blooded animals, and though they live so much in the water, they have hearts that beat and lungs to breathe with something like our own. This shows how wonderfully our heavenly Father adapts every animal which He has created to the life He has intended for it.

PUSSY-CAT.

PUSSY-CAT lives in the servants' hall,
She can set up her back and purr;
The little mice live in a crack in the wall,
But they hardly dare venture to stir.

For whenever they think of taking the air,
Or filling their little maws,
The Pussy-cat says, 'Come out if you dare;
I will catch you all with my claws.'

Scrabble, scrabble, scrabble, went all the little mice;
For they smelt the Cheshire cheese;
The Pussy-cat said, 'It smells very nice,
Now do come out if you please.'



'Squeak,' said the little Mouse; 'squeak, squeak, squeak,'
Said all the young ones too;
'We never creep out when cats are about,
Because we are afraid of you.'

So the cunning old Cat lay down on a mat
By the fire in the servants' hall.
'If the little mice peep they'll think him asleep;'
So she rolled herself up like a ball.

'Squeak,' said the little Mouse, 'we'll creep out,
And eat some Cheshire cheese;
That silly old Cat is asleep on the mat,
And we may sup at our ease.'

Nibble, nibble, nibble, went the little mice,
And they licked their little paws;
And the cunning old Cat sprang up from her mat,
And caught them all with her claws.

Scripture Pictures, 'SCENES IN THE EARLY LIFE OF DAVID,' will be continued in the January Number.

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